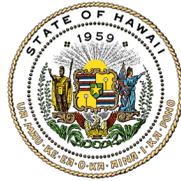


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



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

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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026

10:15 AM

CONFERENCE ROOM 016 & VIDEO CONFERENCE

**SENATE BILL NO. 2713, SD1
RELATING TO PESTICIDES BUFFER ZONES**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2713, SD1, relating to pesticides buffer zones. This bill requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish a one-half mile buffer zone for restricted use pesticides (RUPs) around elderly health care facilities with certain exemptions beginning on January 1, 2027. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity ("Department") respectfully offers the following comments on this bill.

The Department recommends redefining an elderly health care facility to better align with Department of Health's (DOH) authority since DOH regulates and licenses health care facilities. However, it should be noted that DOH licensed facilities are not delineated by age which would make compliance with this law challenging and onerous for the applicator, regulatory agency, and health care facilities. The applicator would need to ensure that the health care facility is not servicing elderly people at the time of application if the applicator intends to use restricted use pesticides. The health care facility would need to maintain and provide records to the regulatory agency if an inspection was conducted to serve as evidence of compliance or noncompliance with the buffer zone. Records may not be obtainable if they violate the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Suggested language for the definition is below:

For the purpose of this subsection, "elderly health care facility" means any facility licensed by the Hawaii Department of Health that will service person or persons, the majority of which are aged sixty-two or older."

The buffer zone around elderly health care facilities are similar to the buffer zones for schools that was enacted with the passage of Act 45, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018. The Department found unintended consequences from the enactment of the buffer zones for schools that may occur when enacting the buffer zone for elderly health care facilities. Water treatment plants which used chlorine gas, which is an RUP pesticide, could not operate wells during school hours. Any wells being treated with RUPs within the buffer zones for elderly health care facilities would need to be shut down or the product would need to be changed.

The Department recommends a later implementation date such as January 1, 2028, to allow outreach to applicators regarding the new buffer zones for elderly health care facilities. This ensures applicators are aware of the new requirements and allows time for impacted users to adjust their practices and operations.

The restriction of all RUPs does not serve the purpose of Hawaii Revised Statutes §149A-28, as certain formulations such as granules and rodent bait blocks, application methods, such as injections, and use types such as use in a laboratory setting have little to no potential to drift.

Should buffer zones be implemented, the Department recommends the need to clarify what pesticide formulations, application methods, and usages are or are not allowable based on their potential to drift.

In addition, the Department has initiated some preliminary analysis. The following are the number of agricultural tax map keys (TMK) that used RUPs in 2024 and may be affected by the increased buffer zones:

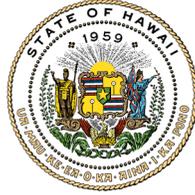
- Kaua'i – 15 parcels
- O'ahu – 58 parcels
- Maui – 21 parcels
- Hawai'i – 48 parcels

These parcels do not include agricultural TMKs which may decide to use RUP products. This analysis is also based solely on agricultural RUP use, and not other uses such as on ornamental, turf, and golf courses.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
JUDICIARY**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:15 AM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 16

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2713, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO PESTICIDES**

Senate Bill 2713, Senate Draft 1 bans applying restricted-use pesticides within a half mile of elderly health care facilities, with exceptions for whole-structure fumigation and invasive species control starting 1/1/2027. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) provides the following comments and recommended amendments.**

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), restricted-use pesticides (RUPs) are not available for purchase or use by the public. RUPs can cause significant harm to the environment and injury to applicators or bystanders without additional restrictions. The "Restricted Use" classification limits a product to use by a certified applicator or someone under the direct supervision of a certified applicator.

The EPA approves pesticides for specific pests and conditions. For instance, "Pesticide A," approved for use on apples, cannot be legally applied to grapes, and an insecticide labeled for "outdoor use" may not be legally used inside a building. Sometimes, the use of a registered pesticide might be limited to applicators with special training. Restrictions on the use of each product depend on factors like the product itself, the application site and method, and its potential risks.

While the Department supports the safe use of any toxicant and the exemption in this bill for invasive species control by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) and the Invasive Species Committees of the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit at the University of Hawaii (ISCs), it believes the restriction may be too narrow. The Department recommends amending this measure

to extend the exemption to include invasive species control conducted by the Department and its agents.

Other points that could use clarification include the rationale for extending the buffer to 2640 feet (half a mile). The buffer radius could cover a large area that the Department recommends mapping to fully consider the impact of the proposed ban to biosecurity. The Department supports science-based decisions and would appreciate a reference to additional information on this distance and the specific facility type.

The Department observes that not all RUPs are sprayed or otherwise likely to drift. Many are in solid form or may be an injected liquid and are unlikely to travel far from their application site. For instance, many rodenticides come in solid pellets or blocks and are often used in bait boxes. Even though some rodenticides are RUPs, they do not drift. It is preferable to consider that the buffer size depends on the application type and form. In other words, the buffer could be larger for liquid sprays, smaller for solids, and even smaller for solids used in bait boxes where drift is unlikely. Given the unlikeliness of solid pesticides to drift from where they are applied, the Department recommends amending this bill to set a buffer for solid RUPs at 50 feet generally, 20 feet if applied in bait boxes, or following the solid RUP's label requirements if the buffer is greater.

The Department supports the safe use of any toxicant. Department staff are well-trained and take their responsibilities seriously. However, invasive species do not recognize land ownership boundaries, and the Department or its agents need access to areas where invasive species may be present.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



HIPHI Board

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Health

HIPHI Initiatives

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Hawai'i Climate Change and Health
Working Group

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Immunization Coalition

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: March 1, 2026

To: Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Support for SB 2713 SD1, Relating to Pesticides

Hrg: March 3, 2026, at 10:15 AM, Conference Room 211

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)¹ **supports SB 2713 SD1**, which prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities.

A Preventable Harm

In our state today, restricted-use pesticides are used in significant quantities, with nearly 215,000 pounds applied on O'ahu in a single year, much near residential communities.² For volatile or drift-prone pesticides, current laws fail to protect people with health conditions, whom numerous medical groups have found to be subject to significantly increased risks of illness and other adverse impacts from prolonged pesticide exposure.³

Acute Health Risks For Kūpuna

Scientific evidence shows that pesticide exposure is associated with increased risks of asthma, neurodevelopmental harm, endocrine disruption, and cancer. The elderly are particularly vulnerable because they often experience overlapping health conditions due to advanced age.

Aging bodies metabolize toxic chemicals more slowly, and many kūpuna live with chronic conditions, such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, or neurological disorders that can be worsened by pesticide exposure. Scientific literature has linked pesticide exposure in older adults to increased risks of respiratory illness, neurodegenerative diseases, cancer, and acute symptoms like dizziness, nausea, and cognitive impairment.⁴

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.

² [The Scope Of Heavy Pesticide Use On Oahu Is Finally In The Public Domain](#), Honolulu Civil Beat, 2023.

³ [Pesticide Impacts on Communities and Schools](#), Richard G Ames, International Journal of Toxicology, October 2002.

⁴ [Parkinson's Disease Is Predominantly an Environmental Disease](#), Journal of Parkinson's Disease, January 2024.



Long-term residential exposure to pesticides has also been associated with more than double the risk of Parkinson's disease.⁵

In agricultural and rural communities where restricted-use pesticides are applied, drift and environmental contamination can expose older residents in their homes and neighborhoods without their consent. Protecting sensitive areas from these chemicals is essential not only for children, but also for Hawai'i's kūpuna, whose well-being can be significantly impacted by even low-level, repeated exposures.

Advancing Health Equity

Because many pesticides can drift beyond their application sites, communities near treated fields may be exposed simply by proximity, including at schools and nearby residential areas. Moreover, exposure to pesticide drift is not experienced equally. Communities located closest to agricultural operations are often rural, Native Hawaiian, or of lower socioeconomic status. Therefore, strengthening buffer zones around sensitive areas is a matter not just of mitigating exposure, but of promoting overall health equity.

Building On Prior Success

Hawai'i is a leader in pesticide regulation. In 2018, Hawai'i became the first state in the nation to ban the neurotoxic pesticide chlorpyrifos because of its well-documented health hazards, setting a national precedent for states taking independent action against pesticide abuse.⁶

Across the country, jurisdictions have adopted stronger buffer zones to protect sensitive communities from pesticide exposure. Establishing stronger buffer zones is an evidence-based public health strategy to prevent illness caused by chemical toxicity, particularly for our kūpuna, who are biologically more vulnerable to environmental toxins. We urge you to pass this bill to continue Hawai'i's legacy of prioritizing the health of our island home.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris Coffield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kris Coffield
Policy and Advocacy Associate

⁵ [The pesticide chlorpyrifos increases the risk of Parkinson's disease](#), Molecular Neurodegeneration, December 2025.

⁶ [Hawaii Bans Pesticides Containing Chlorpyrifos](#), National Caucus of Environmental Legislators, 2018.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:22:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and honorable members of committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, I write today on behalf of our members. We would like to be rid of all pesticides on our Islands but this measure is at least a step in the right direction. Our communities have vulnerable populations and these RUPs have Very Dangerous Drift that can Never be washed off.

Data reflects that 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.

Green Party of Hawai'i offers our support SB 2713 SD1. Please Pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauiol

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 10:30:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair & Committee Members:

As a father and a long-time farmer, who with my wife now has quite elderly parents, it is a constant reminder that we must recognize the health and well-being impact of toxic chemicals.

SB2713 deserves support since it is about protecting our citizens who are more vulnerable.

If anything it should be yet more strict.

Thank you for your due consideration and ultimate support for this legislation.

Yours,

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

'Honaunau, HI

February 25, 2026

To: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Lindsay Stovall
Director, State Affairs

RE: **SB 2713 SD 1 – COMMENTS; AMENDMENT REQUEST**

The American Chemistry Council (ACC) appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments relative to SB 2713 SD1, legislation that prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities.

Structural insulation treated with pesticides serves as a critical tool for deterring termites and other destructive pests while simultaneously improving a building's thermal efficiency and comfort. In Hawaii, where termite pressure is severe and year-round, this insulation provides a passive, built-in layer of protection within walls and other cavities. It effectively complements other standard prevention practices such as inspections, moisture control, and proper construction detailing. For homeowners, it represents a practical way to combine energy efficiency and pest deterrence in a single building material.

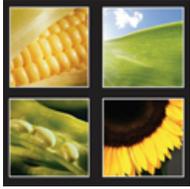
Prohibiting pesticide treated structural insulation in Hawaii would remove a vital protective measure against termite activity. Such a restriction would increase the risk of structural damage, raise long-term repair and maintenance costs for residents, and reduce access to the durable, energy-efficient materials necessary to meet code requirements in termite-prone environments.

For the above reasons, ACC is seeking an exemption for structural insulation and proposes the following language:

(b) Beginning January 1, 2027, no person shall apply a restricted use pesticide on or within one-half mile of an elderly health care facility; provided that this subsection shall not apply to:

- (1) Whole structure fumigation;*
- (2) Invasive species control conducted by the department or by any invasive species committee organized under the pacific cooperative studies unit project of the university of Hawaii;*
- (3) Restrictive use pesticides used by the department of health; and*
- (4) Pesticides specifically used for the purposes of treating and preserving wood **or structural insulation;***

Thank you in advance for considering our views. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-448-2581 or via email at [Lindsay Stovall@americanchemistry.com](mailto:Lindsay_Stovall@americanchemistry.com). You may also contact ACC's Hawaii based representative Ross Yamasaki at 808-531-4551 or via email at ryamasaki@808cch.com.



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SB2713 SD1 – In Opposition
Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026
Time: 10:15 AM
Place: Conference Room 16

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in opposition to SB2713, SD1** which prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities, with exemptions for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control.

HCIA opposes a mandated half-mile buffer zone. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) already regulates the use of pesticides to protect the environment, applicators, and community. Based on scientific research and data, pesticide labels will require applicators to use buffers when necessary. The half-mile buffer zone proposed in this bill is not based on science.

The negative impacts of a half-mile buffer zone would be significant for local agriculture, reducing farmer's opportunities to maximize their property to grow food. SB2713, SD1 could be particularly onerous because many elderly health care facilities are sprinkled throughout communities and neighborhoods statewide, including residential homes.

Proposals like half-mile buffer zones create unnecessary additional hardship and disincentives to enter into or grow Hawaii's agriculture industry. Act 45 already put into law a 100-foot buffer and this is workable for farmers. We ask the committee to defer a bill that only makes conditions more difficult for our local agriculture producers, especially when scientific data does not support the proposal.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit our testimony in opposition.

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:13:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Testifying for Kauai Women's Caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respect & Protect our Kupuna. 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. Buffer zones needed around areas our kupuna and children live & play now



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
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TESTIMONY ON SB 2713, SD1
RELATING TO PESTICIDE BUFFER ZONES

Conference Room 016 & Videoconference
10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, 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 respectfully opposes SB 2713, SD1, which specifically and unfairly targets farmers and ranchers, but not other RUP users, by extending the current buffer zone restrictions to ban RUP use in all areas within a half a mile of an elderly health care facility, defined extremely broadly, any time of day or night.

As active community members, our primary focus is on the safety and health of our families, our employees, and our communities as we produce the food and other products that residents and visitors need and enjoy. **We support evidence-based pesticide laws and regulations, along with appropriate enforcement and penalties for violations.**

The proposed mandates in SB 2713, SD1 impose bans on farmers' use of necessary crop protection tools without providing a clear, demonstrable benefit to public health or environmental safety. Any amendments to pesticide regulations should prioritize practicality and fairness while maintaining accountability and transparency. The public and State leadership want more local food production. Everyone is beginning to fully recognize that invasive species have taken over our State and must be controlled; however, many do not comprehend that farmers have been dealing with these destructive imported species for decades. It is a constant battle. **Measures like this will make it impossible for local farmers to continue to farm.**

We believe this measure is unjustified, unworkable, unfairly discriminates against farmers, and is unenforceable.

- Robust and enforceable federal and State laws and regulations already limit the use of pesticides, and these restrictions are updated as new science-based information becomes available. **Pesticide regulations take into account risk of exposure for people of all ages and occupations, for animals and plants, and for the environment.** RUPs are even more strictly regulated.
- **Local farmers and ranchers are already at a competitive disadvantage** compared to mainland and foreign farmers who can produce and sell food in Hawai'i much cheaper than we can and do not have these types of restrictions on pesticide use.
- **If RUPs are so dangerous that a half-mile buffer zone is necessary, why does the bill continue to allow fumigation RUPs to be used in any building, including residential homes where many elderly live and spend most of their time? Why does the bill exempt invasive species control conducted by certain agencies or committees, as well as restricted use pesticides used by the Department of Health and for the treatment and preservation of wood?** Farmers and ranchers are greatly impacted by invasive species and rely on the same tools, training, and certifications required under law to use RUPs safely. **If exemptions are appropriate for certain users and purposes, then the policy should also recognize that farmers who are certified applicators and who comply with extensive regulatory requirements are likewise capable of using these tools responsibly.**
- **The definition of elderly health care facility is so broad that every place** "used, operated, or designed to provide medical diagnosis, treatment, nursing, rehabilitative, or preventive care to any person or persons aged sixty-two or older" would require a RUP buffer zone of a half a mile around it at all times. Every grocery store with a pharmacy could be included under this definition. There are few locations in Hawai'i that would be more than a half an acre away from each of these places, making it impossible for many farmers to control invasive species using RUPs, which may be the only effective tool as more of these species continue to enter the State.

We respectfully ask our leaders across the state to please set aside unjustified legislation that discourages farming, and instead, support laws and policies that will strengthen agriculture's foundation in Hawaii.

Thank you for your continued support of our local farmers who look forward to providing more of Hawaii's agricultural needs.



Testimony from Scott Dahlman, Senior Director Government Affairs, CropLife America

Testimony in Opposition to SB 2713 – Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones
Senate Committee on Judiciary
March 3, 10:15 am

Aloha Chair Rhoads and members of the committee,

CropLife America (CLA) is the national association representing manufacturers, formulators, and distributors of pesticides products used in agriculture production. We support and promote scientific-based policy in the regulation of pesticide products at both the state and federal level. We oppose SB 2713.

CLA advocates for scientifically sound and practical policies that protect the public and our environment, but we oppose broad, one-size-fits-all, no-spray buffer zones that restrict agricultural productivity. Instead, we promote the use of drift reduction technologies (DRAs), precise application methods, and collaboration with regulators and farmers to create workable mitigation tools, such as using managed areas to satisfy buffer requirements.

Key Aspects of CLA's Position on Buffer Zones

- **ESA Mitigation Strategies:** CLA works with partners like the Council of Producers & Distributors of Agrotechnology (CPDA) to ensure that buffer zones for endangered species are based on science rather than arbitrary, wide restrictions that harm farming operations.
- **Support for Technology:** Instead of large, mandatory "no-spray" zones, CLA supports using Drift Reduction Agents (DRAs) and advanced, precise application technologies to minimize off-target movement.
- **Flexibility and Collaboration:** CLA emphasizes that regulators and lawmakers should work with farmers to refine requirements, ensuring that mitigation tools are practical and effective.
- **Buffer Zone Alternatives:** CLA advocates for the use of "managed areas" (such as established conservation areas or specific habitats) to count towards required buffer distances, providing flexibility in how farmers meet environmental standards.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** CLA focuses on balancing necessary pest control with environmental protection, promoting sustainability through precision agriculture.

Mahalo for your time.



Date of Hearing: March 3, 2026

To: Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Subject: **SB 2713 SD1**, Relating to Pesticides and Elderly Health Care Facilities

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy respectfully submits testimony **in strong support** of SB2713 SD1 as amended by the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN). SB2713 SD1 establishes buffer zones for the application of restricted use pesticides (RUPs) around elderly health care facilities. This represents a prudent, targeted, evidence-based approach to protect vulnerable populations, in alignment with Hawai'i's broader commitments to public health, environmental stewardship, and food system resilience.

AEN's amendments addresses operational and regulatory concerns expressed by the Department of Health, Western Wood Preservers Institute and Treated Wood Council, while preserving the bill's purpose of protecting sensitive kupuna communities from pesticide drift.

SB 2713 SD1 tackles a well-documented, well-researched public health risk. Restricted use pesticides are designated precisely because of their potential to cause harm to human health and the environment. Many elderly residents have compromised immune systems, respiratory conditions, or other chronic health issues. The elderly have little agency over their proximity to pesticide application sites. Thus, our kūpuna face heightened vulnerability to pesticide drift and exposure. Essential healthcare workers who serve our kūpuna are similarly vulnerable.

Furthermore, this legislation is not adversarial to farmers. Rather, it reflects the principle that agricultural productivity and public health must coexist. Protecting keiki, kupuna, and healthcare facilities from drift does not undermine farming. Alternative organic integrated pest management practices or pesticides that are not RUPs exist for farmers.

Establishing a one-half mile buffer zone is a measured, preventative approach that prioritizes community health. Hawai'i Food+ Policy respectfully urges the JDC to pass SB2713 SD1.

Mahalo,

Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

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.



LATE

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) **Strongly Supports: SB 2713 SD1**

Friday, March 3rd, 2026 10:15 a.m. Conference Room 016

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

HAPA strongly supports SB 2713 SD1, which beginning 1/1/2027, prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities, with exemptions for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control.

The buffer zone proposed in SB 2713 SD1 will provide a buffer between elderly health care facilities and the use of highly toxic Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs) that is supported by peer-reviewed epidemiological research. This measure aims to provide a small layer of protection for Hawai'i's kūpuna from the potential impacts of highly toxic RUPs drifting through their care facilities by establishing ½ mile RUP buffer zones.

Despite mounting evidence of the dangers even more common general use pesticides, such as RoundUp/Glyphosate, have on public health; **this measure would not impact any general use pesticide application or provide buffers for use**. This measure only applies to the State listed class of highly hazardous toxic pesticides that are already restricted in Hawai'i (RUPs).

Findings from 2019-2021 RUP Usage Data

2019 marked the first year RUP reporting data became publicly available. Analysis of this data has revealed that specific communities in Hawai'i, such as North-Central O'ahu (Waialua-Wahiawā) are consistently and heavily exposed to drift prone pesticides in close proximity to residential areas. Specific communities in Hawai'i, such as West Kaua'i are facing large combinations of RUP usage, and likely chronic exposures from frequent applications.

The data suggests that additional public health and environmental protections are needed to protect our communities. Widespread protections for communities and sensitive environments are needed.

An in-depth analysis of data from 2019-2021¹ shows particularly concerning heavy use of fumigants, 1,3-Dichloropropene (1,3-D or trade name Telone) and Metam Sodium. Data suggests approximately between 100,000-200,000 lbs of these active ingredients are being applied to north central O'ahu, annually. These fumigants are known to be carcinogenic and

¹ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1fbfb09ad12746be8df6df082fe61886>



highly prone to drift and cause respiratory illness. In 2020, 1,3-D was found in the air at high levels that significantly increase cancer risk up to seven and a half miles away from the closest known application sites.²

The 2019 data shows approximately 99% of all the RUP use reported in all of Hawai'i for agriculture, landscape, conservation etc was reportedly used by only 10 entities (5 of which grow food) and 97% of all the use reported in Hawai'i was only 5 entities. Subsequent years also show that a handful of RP users dominate usage statewide. This data clearly shows that farmers are not widely using RUPs and therefore not many areas throughout Hawai'i would see buffers generated by this measure - the sector on a whole would not be meaningfully impacted. This measure seeks to protect our kūpuna from exposure to known highly hazardous toxic pesticides.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

² Nathan Donley and Sarah Aird, October 2021, OP ED: California Needs to quit ignoring the public health and climate cost of pesticides

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:51:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill. Mahalo.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 8:25:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Joell Edwards, and I am a resident of Wainiha, Kaua‘i.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 2713, SD1, which would establish protective buffer zones restricting the application of restricted-use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities.

Our kupuna are particularly vulnerable to the health impacts of pesticide exposure, including respiratory irritation, neurologic stress, and other chronic effects. When restricted-use pesticides are applied near facilities where kūpuna live and receive care, the risk of involuntary exposure increases.

Protecting elderly care facilities with meaningful buffer zones is a precautionary public health measure that recognizes the unique interconnectedness of Hawai‘i’s land, air, water, and people. Establishing a half-mile buffer around care facilities is not just about safeguarding one site — it is about acknowledging that what happens on land travels through wind and water to impact families, oceans, and future generations.

For these reasons I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 2713, SD1.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 6:36:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2713 SB RELATING TO PESTICIDE BUFFER ZONES.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

February 27, 2026

**TESTIMONY OF FERN HOLLAND
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON**

SB 2713, SD 1, RELATING TO PESTICIDE BUFFER ZONES

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

10:15 a.m.

Conference Room 016

Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2713, SD 1, Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I serve as Chair of the Parks & Recreation / Transportation Committee, and I am confident that this bill is grounded in sound science and basic public health principles and will protect the State's *kūpuna* from pesticide drift and exposure.

Pesticide drift is not hypothetical. Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs), particularly fumigants, are designed to volatilize and move through air and soil. Air monitoring has detected hazardous levels of pesticides more than half (1/2) a mile from treated fields, and in documented cases on the continent, harmful levels were detected from sources miles away. Wind, temperature inversions, and Hawai'i's unique microclimates further increase the unpredictability of drift. A one-half mile buffer is a reasonable, science-based safeguard that reflects what we already know about how these chemicals behave in the real world.

SB 2713, SD 1 sets reasonable boundaries to protect *kūpuna* and their families so they can be served safely at any elderly health care facility without fear of accidental pesticide exposure. At the same time, we must acknowledge the larger picture: Hawai'i must support farmers in transitioning away from a heavy reliance on toxic chemicals toward non-toxic, regenerative, and sustainable practices. That transition requires investment, technical assistance, and time. While we work toward that future, this bill represents a common sense, necessary step to reduce

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of SB 2713, SD 1
February 27, 2026
Page 2

harm and protect *kūpuna* in the trusted places where they receive vital health care services within our communities.

Protecting our elderly population where they live and receive health care should not be controversial. SB 2713, SD 1 is a prudent, evidence-based measure that fulfills the fundamental responsibility to safeguard public health.

Mahalo again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2713, SD 1. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fern Holland", written in a cursive style.

FERN HOLLAND
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

RM:sf

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 12:50:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

What Does This Bill Do?

Prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities, with certain exemptions

Why Is This Important? Sample Testimony:

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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau‘i

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:32:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fred hofer	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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Fred Hofer

Hilo

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:57:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

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 Restricted Use Pesticides (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.

Mahalo for you consideration,

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:00:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:25:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dita Škalic	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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 7:09:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Val Hertzog	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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Val Hertzog, Kilauea

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 8:00:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

I urge you to support SB 2713 SD1.

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 – children and the elderly.

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.

Thank you

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 10:15:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Mahalo,

Emily Gambino, Makawao

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 12:37:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

kimdognhyeon

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 6:07:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman Miyasato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB2713 SD1.

Sincerely,

Norman Miyasato, Kaneohe

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:40:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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 SB2713, a crucial measure to protect Hawai‘i's most vulnerable residents—our kūpuna in elderly health care facilities—from the serious and preventable harms of pesticide exposure.

This bill is fundamentally about our commitment to the health and safety of those who have given so much to our communities and now rely on us for their care. Residents of elderly health care facilities are a uniquely at-risk population. Many have compromised immune systems, pre-existing respiratory conditions, or limited mobility that restricts their ability to avoid or relocate from exposure. They are, in effect, a captive population within these facilities, and we have a moral and legal obligation to ensure the air they breathe and the environment they live in is safe.

Pesticide exposure, particularly from "restricted use pesticides," is not a hypothetical risk. These are chemicals designated as such because of their potential to cause significant harm to public health and the environment. They can drift far from the point of application, affecting not only farm workers and pollinators but also entire communities downwind.

Since 2019, when restricted use pesticide data first became publicly available in Hawai‘i, we have seen clear evidence that our communities are being exposed to heavy, drift-prone pesticides. This data confirms that the threat is real and ongoing.

For kūpuna in a care facility, the consequences of this exposure can be severe—exacerbating chronic illnesses, triggering acute health events, and diminishing their overall quality of life. They should not have to bear this risk simply because of where their care facility is located.

SB2713 offers a straightforward, common-sense solution: prohibit the application of these dangerous pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities. The half-mile buffer zone is a science-based approach to create a meaningful safeguard against pesticide drift. The bill also includes certain exemptions for public health emergencies, ensuring that necessary pest control can still occur when absolutely critical, without undermining the core protective purpose of the law.

This is not an anti-agriculture bill. It is a pro-community, pro-kūpuna bill. It recognizes that we can and must balance agricultural needs with the imperative to protect our most vulnerable

populations. By establishing these buffer zones, we are upholding our kuleana to ensure that the places meant to be havens of care and comfort for our elders are not also sites of involuntary exposure to toxic chemicals.

For the health, dignity, and safety of our kūpuna in care facilities across the state, I urge you to pass SB2713.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:43:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:47:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strongly support

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 11:16:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Weiss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of the bill.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 1:17:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am **in strong support of SB2713 SD1**, which prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities, with certain exemptions.

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 kūpuna.

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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 2:55:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of SD2713 SD1. I believe establishing a buffer zone to protect our vulnerable populations such as kupuna is an important ethical policy. Mahalo for your consideration.

Testimony in Strong Support of S.B. 2713, S.D.1
Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones (Senior Safe Zone Act)

March 1, 2026

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

This testimony is submitted in strong support of S.B. 2713, S.D.1, a legal concept I proposed to Senator Gabbard now known as the Senior Safe Zone Act, which establishes pesticide buffer zones around elderly health care facilities to protect kupuna from chemical drift and chronic toxic exposure.

At its surface, this bill is modest, reasonable, and squarely within the State's traditional police powers. It protects elders from documented public-health risks associated with restricted-use pesticides. It is carefully scoped, includes exemptions for invasive species control and essential public health uses, and defers to the most protective standard where labeling conflicts arise. In short, it is exactly the kind of law a responsible legislature passes without controversy.

But beneath that practical surface lies something rarer, and more important.

Hawai'i occupies a unique position in human history. It was among the last places on Earth where a complex, thriving, indigenous society functioned without courts, banks, titles, or standing armies. This is not romanticism; it is chronology. For most of human time, wealth could not be abstracted, digitized, hoarded, or stored as symbols. Value lived in faces, hands, reputations, generosity, and the dinner table. It moved. It circulated. It was visible.

Contact with modern systems came late, abruptly, and with extraordinary speed. In geological terms, and even in cultural terms, it was the blink of an eye. Many kupuna alive today are only a few generations removed from ancestors who had never encountered these systems at all.

That matters.

Elders are often described as dependents. In truth, they are archives. They carry lived memory of social arrangements that predate modern abstractions of power and value. They remember, not theoretically but bodily, that prosperity without reciprocity collapses, that intelligence divorced from care curdles, and that systems

which reward accumulation without restraint eventually consume the people they were meant to serve.

In contemporary language, one might call kupuna living data centers. Not warehouses storing zeros and ones, but human repositories of pattern recognition, ethics, and long-range judgment. Unlike artificial systems, kupuna knowledge is contextual, relational, and tempered by consequence. When such a living data center is lost, it cannot be rebuilt.

This bill recognizes that reality quietly, without saying so out loud.

The Legislature has already found that older adults are especially vulnerable to pesticide drift due to slower metabolic processing, and that chronic exposure is associated with cancer, Parkinson's disease, dementia, and shortened lifespans. These findings align with a substantial body of peer-reviewed public health literature and federal assessments. No credible authority disputes that elders face heightened risk from toxic exposure.

What S.B. 2713 does is treat that vulnerability not as a weakness, but as a reason for heightened care of potentially the most valuable resource on the planet: wisdom.

There is an old legal principle, older than corporations and older than most modern institutions: the measure of a society is how it treats those who no longer need to prove their worth. Hawai'i's Constitution places health, environmental protection, and the public trust at the center of governance. This bill fits comfortably within that framework.

The humor here, if any, is gentle and instructive. We live in an era that treats data centers as assets requiring absolute protection, redundancy, and buffer zones measured in miles. Meanwhile, human repositories of wisdom are not currently protected from chemical drift. S.B. 2713 corrects that inversion.

It does so without blaming anyone, without vilifying industry, and without denying the necessity of agriculture, invasive species control, or public health interventions. It simply draws a line and says: not here, not on my auntie!

That restraint is important. Laws endure not because they shout, but because they are reasonable when reread decades later.

There is also a quieter relevance to our current moment. Periods of moral disorientation tend to produce elaborate systems of control, scoring, and abstraction. History shows that such periods eventually burn themselves out, often painfully. What carries humanity through those cycles is not cleverness, but memory. Not innovation, but continuity.

Kupuna hold that continuity in their very cells and organs.

Protecting them from avoidable toxic exposure is not only compassionate; it is strategically wise. It preserves intelligence we do not know how to recreate, at a time when certainty is scarce and humility would be prudent.

S.B. 2713 does not claim to save the world. It does something better. It protects the conditions under which wisdom can survive long enough to be shared, so that we can save ourselves.

For those reading this testimony, whether legislators or members of the public, there is also a simple takeaway unrelated to statute: stay connected to elders. Visit them. Listen to them. Ask what they have seen repeat, and what they have seen fail. Those conversations are worth more than most things we currently measure. Call your aunties!

In closing, S.B. 2713 is sound law, grounded in science, aligned with Hawai‘i’s values, and quietly profound in its implications. It treats kupuna not as collateral, but as caretakers of something still needed for our very collective survival.

I respectfully urge its passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

/s/ Travis A. Liggett, M.S.

travis.liggett@gmail.com

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:57:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

It is important to protect our 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 safeguarding these spaces is important to maintain our commitment to the health of the care facility residents. Please support SB2713.

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:47:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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 SB 2713 SD1, which prohibits the application of restricted use pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health care facilities, with limited and clearly defined exemptions.

Pesticide exposure can cause serious harm to public health and the environment. In addition to impacting surrounding communities, farm workers, pollinators, ecosystems, and neighboring crops, restricted use pesticides pose heightened risks to our most vulnerable populations—our keiki and our kupuna.

Protecting residents of elderly health care facilities is especially important because these individuals often have limited mobility and fewer options to relocate or avoid exposure when pesticides are applied nearby. Ensuring strong safeguards around these facilities reflects our responsibility to protect the health, safety, and dignity of kupuna who depend on these environments for care and stability.

Since 2019, restricted use pesticide data has been publicly available, and it has revealed that communities across Hawai‘i are being exposed to significant amounts of drift-prone pesticides. Establishing a buffer zone around elderly health care facilities is a reasonable and necessary step to reduce exposure risks and provide meaningful protection to this at-risk population.

SB 2713 SD1 offers a common-sense public health safeguard by prioritizing the well-being of residents in elder care settings while maintaining limited exemptions where appropriate. This bill reinforces Hawai‘i’s commitment to protecting vulnerable populations from preventable harm.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support SB 2713 SD1.

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

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:47:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Keala Fung and I support sb2713 sd1.

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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Keala Fung, Honolulu

LATE

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 4:42:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pesticide exposure can cause significant harm to public health and the environment. Please PASS this important measure.

LATE

SB-2713-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 4:47:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion McHenry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To all committee members,

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.

Please support SB 2713 SD1.

Sincerely,

Marion McHenry

Princeville, Kauai