

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Testimony COMMENTING on SB2713
RELATING TO PESTICIDE BUFFER ZONES

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date, Time, and Room Number: 2/06/26, 3:01 p.m.; Room Number 224

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

2 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments for SB2713.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Services Division (“EHSD”), Vector Control
4 Branch (“VCB”) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department:

5 SB2713 prohibits the application of pesticides within a half-mile radius of elderly health
6 care facilities, with exemptions for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control
7 beginning 1/01/2027.

8 The Department is concerned that the prohibition will prevent the VCB from being able
9 to use restricted use pesticides due to the buffer zone requirement. If no exemptions are
10 provided to the Department, elderly health care facilities may not be treated with the most
11 appropriate available pesticide during vector-borne disease outbreaks and may become
12 harborage areas for vectors to proliferate, ultimately reducing or nullifying the effectiveness of
13 localized treatments. To reduce the likelihood of vector-borne disease transmission and
14 localized outbreaks, the Department requests an exemption from the buffer zone requirement.

15 The Department is highly judicious and targeted with the application of any pesticides,
16 however, the ability to use the full complement of legally available pesticides in the event of a

1 vector-borne disease outbreak is important to effectively respond to and reduce the spread of
2 vector-borne diseases. This bill provides an exemption for invasive species control conducted by
3 the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity or by any Invasive Species Committee organized
4 under the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit project of the University of Hawai'i. The VCB
5 respectfully requests to be added to the exemption. The Department has offered the
6 amendment below.

7 The testimony provided is specific to the issue of buffer zones around elderly health
8 care facilities and does not support or oppose other aspects of the measure.

9 **Offered Amendments:** The VCB respectfully requests the following; requested statutory
10 material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken, requested new statutory material is
11 underscored:

12 “~~[[§149A-28]] Buffer zones. ...~~(2) Invasive species control conducted by the
13 department of agriculture and biosecurity, the department of health, or by any invasive species
14 committee organized under the pacific cooperative studies unit project of the university of
15 Hawaii;”

16

17 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on 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
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DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

Before the Senate Committees on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Friday, February 6, 2026
3:01 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 411

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2713
RELATING TO PESTICIDES

Senate Bill 2713 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.**

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), restricted-use products (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 broad. The Department recommends extending 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) and whether the buffer might be applied to other locations, such as schools, in addition to elderly health care facilities. The buffer radius could cover a large area that the Department recommends mapping to fully consider the impact of the proposed ban. 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. Many are in solid form 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.

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.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



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

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2026
3:01 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2713 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 beginning on January 1, 2027. Exemptions to this bill are for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity ("Department") respectfully offers the following comments on this bill.

The Department recommends defining an elderly health care facility to better enforce the law.

The buffer zone around elderly health care facilities is 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. Additionally, there are no exemptions for use of RUPs to address any public health concerns.

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.

In addition, the Department has initiated some preliminary analysis. The following are the number of agricultural tax map keys 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 parcels 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.

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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HAWAII PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Century Square – 1188 Bishop St., Ste. 1003*Honolulu, HI 96813-3304

Telephone (808) 533-6404 • Fax (808) 533-2739

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Senate Bill 2713

Restricted Use Pesticides; Elderly Health Care Facility Buffer Zones

Hearing: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)

Date: February 6, 2026

Time: 3:01 PM

Submitted by: Hawaii Pest Control Association

Position: Oppose

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

The Hawaii Pest Control Association respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to SB 2713, which would prohibit the application of restricted use pesticides within a one-half mile radius of elderly health care facilities beginning January 1, 2027.

Licensed pest control applicators in Hawaii already operate under some of the most stringent federal and state regulations in the nation. Restricted use pesticides are applied only by certified professionals who are trained in exposure mitigation, application precision, weather considerations, and site-specific risk assessments. The proposed one-half mile buffer zone is excessive, arbitrary, and unsupported by scientific risk-based analysis.

In urban and residential areas, a one-half mile radius would effectively eliminate the ability to provide pest management services to surrounding homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure. This would significantly impair efforts to control disease vectors such as mosquitoes, rodents, and termites, which pose serious public health and structural risks—particularly to elderly populations.

The bill does not account for modern application technologies, integrated pest management practices, or the difference between application types, formulations, and exposure pathways. Additionally, the broad prohibition could unintentionally increase public health risks by limiting timely pest control responses.

The Hawaii Pest Control Association urges the Committee to defer SB 2713 or, at a minimum, exempt licensed pest control applicators operating in compliance with existing state and federal regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

Emmanuel Zibakalam



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 6, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2713
RELATING TO PESTICIDE BUFFER ZONES

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
3:01 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 respectfully opposes SB 2713, 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 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 have submitted testimony in opposition to similar measures on today's agenda. Rather than repeat previous testimony, we will focus on why 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 buffer zones are necessary, why does the bill allow fumigation RUPs to be used in any building,** even within residential homes where most elderly live and spend most of their time? **Why does the bill also exempt invasive species control** conducted by certain agencies or committees? Farmers and ranchers are greatly impacted by invasive species and are not likely to be helped by these organizations. Instead, farmers who use RUPs maintain the mandatory training and certifications and comply with the myriad regulatory requirements that allow them to use RUPs safely.
- **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.



Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

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

Friday, February 6th, 2024 3:01 p.m. Conference Room 224

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

HAPA strongly supports SB 2713, 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 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.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is written below the word 'Respectfully,'.

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



6 February, 2026

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

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

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy respectfully submits testimony **in strong support** of SB2713, which 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.

SB 2713 addresses a well-documented public health risk. Restricted use pesticides are designated precisely because of their potential to cause harm to human health and the environment if misapplied or if exposure occurs among sensitive populations. Elderly residents – many of whom have compromised immune systems, respiratory conditions, or other chronic health issues – have little agency over their proximity to pesticide application. The elderly face heightened vulnerability to pesticide drift and exposure. Essential healthcare workers serving these populations are similarly affected.

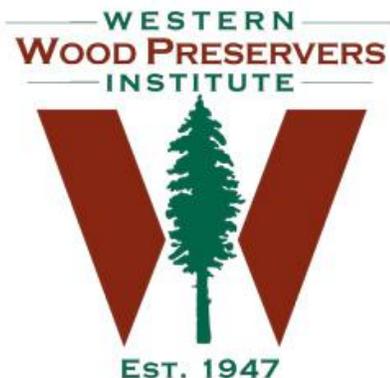
We recognize concerns raised regarding potential impacts to certain large-scale farming operations however, alternative organic integrated pest management practices or pesticides that are not RUPs exist for farmers. Hawai'i Food+ Policy emphasizes that this bill applies only to RUPs, which are already subject to heightened regulation. The bill does not restrict the use of general-use pesticides, including glyphosate or similar pesticides available on the market. We also appreciate the inclusion of clear exemptions for invasive species control, recognizing the urgent ecological and agricultural threats invasive species pose.

SB2713 reflects a balanced approach: it protects those least able to protect themselves, by restricting the most hazardous pesticides. For these reasons, Hawai'i Food+ Policy respectfully urges the AEN to pass SB2713.

Mahalo,
Brandon Kinnard & 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.



(sent via email to sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov)

February 3, 2026

Honorable Mike Gabbard
State Capitol
415 South Beretania St. Room 201
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Opposition to SB 2713: Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones

Dear Chair Gabbard and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

The Western Wood Preservers Institute (WWPI) and Treated Wood Council (TWC) are writing to express our opposition and to propose amendments to SB 2713, which is scheduled to be heard in your committee on Friday, February 6. The bill will establish a half-mile buffer zone around elderly health care facilities from restricted use pesticides. The bill also provides exemptions for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control. We are requesting that the application of a wood preservative pesticide be exempt from the buffer zone.

WWPI is a non-profit trade association based in Vancouver, Washington. We serve the interests of the preserved wood industry in western North America, including Hawaii. WWPI is a resource that works with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as designers, contractors, and users over the preserved wood life cycle. TWC is an international trade association, serving the treated wood industry with more than 580 member organizations, including those with several operations in Hawaii (Hilo, Kapolei, Ookola and Wahiawa).

Preserved wood products are essential to our daily lives. The electricity we use is provided via overhead power lines supported by preserved wood utility poles. Vessels that transport cargo rely on preserved wood pilings for many dock and port facilities. Commerce is transported by trains which ride on rails built on preserved wood ties that create the foundation of the railroad tracks. Vehicles are kept

safely on roads with guardrails mounted on preserved wood posts. Farmers and ranchers utilize preserved posts and poles to construct fences for the livestock we consume and to support the agriculture we eat.

Preserved wood products are also required by the Hawaii State Building Code (Section 2303.1.9) for all structural lumber, which includes plywood, posts, beams, rafters, joints, trusses, studs, plates, sills, sleepers, roof and floor sheathing, flooring and headers of new wood frame buildings and additions.

The application of a wood preservative pesticide is unique as they are applied within a sealed steel cylinder or inside an enclosed building at secure facilities by trained technicians. There is no atmospheric exposure caused by the application of wood preservative pesticides. (Please see the photograph on the last page.) The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires strict adherence to the preservative pesticide label, which protects the environment, human health, and pollinators.

Due to the unique nature of applying wood preservatives, the legislature has exempted wood preservatives from legislation. Some examples of wood preservative pesticides being excluded from legislation are:

- [HB 1582](#) (2024, by Representative Perruso) would restrict the application of a neonicotinoid
- [SB 12](#) (2025, by Senator Inouye) will restrict the application of a neonicotinoid
- [SB 2100](#) (2026, by Senator Gabbard) will require quarterly rather than annual reporting of all use of restricted use pesticides
- [SB 2103](#) (2026, by Senator Gabbard) will establish a half mile buffer zone for pesticides around schools and parks

SB 2713 amends Section 149A-28 by establishing a one-half mile buffer zone from the application of a restricted use pesticide around an elderly health care facility. The bill also includes an exemption for whole structure fumigation and invasive species control. Since the application of wood preservative pesticides do not drift, we respectfully request to be included in the exempts from the half-mile buffer zone. Our proposed amendments are shown in **red** below:

SECTION 3. Section 149A-28, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

§ 149A – 28 Buffer zones.

- (a) Beginning January 1, 2019, no person shall apply a restricted use pesticide on or within one hundred feet of a school property during normal school hours; provided that this section shall not apply to whole structure fumigation; provided further that if this section is determined to conflict with any pesticide application information listed on the pesticide label, the more restrictive provision shall apply.
- (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; or
- (2) Invasive species control conducted by the department of agriculture and biosecurity or by any invasive species committee organized under the pacific cooperative studies unit project of the university of Hawaii; provided further that if this subsection is determined to conflict with any pesticide application information listed on the pesticide label, the more restrictive provision shall apply-; or
- (3) Pesticides specifically used for the purposes of treating and preserving wood.

For the purposes of this subsection, "elderly health care facility" means any licensed hospital, institution, place, or building, or portion thereof, private or public, other than federal facilities or services, whether organized for profit or not, used, operated, or designed to provide medical diagnosis, treatment, nursing, rehabilitative, or preventive care to any person or persons aged sixty-two or older.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our concerns and to propose an amendment to SB 2713. Please contact our Director of Government Relations, Ryan Pessah at ryan@wwpi.org or (619) 889-1666 to discuss our comments in more detail or if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Butch Bernhardt

Butch Bernhardt
Executive Director
Western Wood Preservers Institute

Jeffrey T. Miller

Jeffrey T. Miller
President & Executive Director
Treated Wood Council

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment



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SB2713 Pesticide Buffer Zones
Sen AEN Hearing – 3:01 PM
February 6, 2026
Testimony By: Jonathan Jefts

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Senate AEN Committee:

I am Jonathan Jefts, Manager of Sugarland Farms, Inc. Our family farms on Oahu and Molokai grow approximately 1 million pounds of import replacement produce weekly. These crops include bananas, green bell peppers, cabbages, Chinese cabbages, cucumbers, and several varieties of tomatoes and watermelons.

The health and safety of our workers, the community and certainly sensitive populations like the elderly are top-of-mind when we farm, and that is on a 24/7 basis. However, we respectfully oppose SB2713, which proposes a one-half buffer zone for RUP use near elderly health care facilities, and does not apply to whole structure fumigation or invasive species control conducted by DAB or any invasive species committee organized under the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit Project/UH.

These exemptions appear to discriminate against responsible farmers who use the tools of Integrated Pest Management, general and restricted use pesticides when necessary to grow produce that is competitive with imported mainland or international produce. Responsible farmers use pesticides registered by the US EPA, which have been vetted for safety and ensure the protection of communities, farm workers and sensitive populations. Responsible farmers follow federal and state requirements for application and reporting.

We ask for due diligence in mapping out how much productive agricultural land will be lost with the collective proposed buffer zones of one-half mile, or 2,640 feet, around elderly health facilities, school properties and State and County parks (SB2103). It raises questions of what is left for responsible agricultural production, and who compensates the farmer for the taking of land in production.

Bad actors, those not in compliance with pesticide applications, should be caught and face the consequences, and have the opportunity to be educated on appropriate pesticide applications. Adverse policies and laws should not restrict the majority of farmers who comply. Sufficient resources for DOA inspectors with the flexibility to conduct site visits in the evening, on weekends, and on holidays during daytime hours are needed because farmers are working those hours.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



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

Testimony in Opposition to SB 2713 – Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, Feb. 6, 3:01 pm, rm. 224

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and members of the committee,

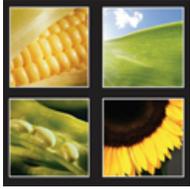
CropLife America (CLA) is the national association representing manufacturers, formulators, and distributors of pesticides products used in agriculture production. We support and promote scientific-based policy in the regulation of pesticide products at both the state and federal level. We oppose SB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



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SB2713 – In Opposition
Relating to Pesticide Buffer Zones
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Date: Friday, February 6, 2026
Time: 3:01 PM
Place: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in opposition to SB2713**, 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 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

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 2:59:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/6/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am available for questions.

SB-2713

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 5:39:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/6/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support

SB-2713

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 5:10:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/6/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Again, we need to ban all pesticides for everyone's health and well-being. One half mile does not cut it when scientists are finding pesticides in our polar ice. And, fumigation pesticides are among the most toxic creating health problems among even the healthiest of individuals. Please do more homework and ban all of these toxic chemicals!

SB-2713

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:03:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/6/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doorae Shin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this measure. We need more regulations on harmful pesticides to protect public and environmental health.

Mahalo,

Doorae Shin