

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

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

**SENATE BILL NO. 3162
RELATING TO STRATEGIC FOOD RESERVES**

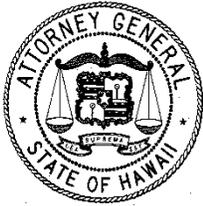
Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 3162. This bill establishes the Strategic Food Reserve Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department). Establishes purchasing requirements for crops, the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Market Development Grant Program, and the Strategic Food Reserves Program Special Fund. It also establishes a timeline for implementation and requires reports to the legislature. The Department supports the intent of the bill and offers comments.

The establishment of a strategic food reserves on each island will provide each island citizens with essential nutrition during severe weather events and supply chain disruptions. The integration of local agricultural products into this food reserve system will provide additional markets for agricultural producers and can help develop innovative shelf-stable products that utilize local agricultural production.

The Department would recommend longer timelines for implementation as finding suitable storage sites on each island may be difficult or need to be constructed, agricultural production will take time to scale up, and priority crops will need to be determined. In addition, given the scale and breadth of the proposed program, there needs to be a dedicated source of funding for the program and adequate resources need to be provided along with sufficient personnel to carry out the directives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 3162, RELATING TO STRATEGIC FOOD RESERVES.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

DATE: Friday, February 13, 2026 **TIME:** 3:10 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Travis T. Moon or Christopher J.I. Leong,
Deputy Attorneys General

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill establishes the Hawaii Strategic Food Reserves Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of a strategic food reserve on each island of the State. The bill requires the DAB to maintain a three-month reserve supply of essential non-perishable foods for a percentage of the resident population of each island. The bill also establishes the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Market Development Grant Program, and the Strategic Food Reserves Program Special Fund.

Section 141-E of the new part proposed to be added to chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, by section 2 of this bill (beginning on page 12, line 10) establishes the Agricultural Market Development Grant Program. However, the bill does not provide standards for those grants to be awarded. Article VII, section 4, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii provides that "[n]o grant of public money or property shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." We recommend that the bill be amended to include sufficient grant standards for section 141-E. We have attached draft standards to this testimony as a sample to work from. These standards could be inserted beginning on page 13, line 18, as a new subsection (b). Conforming amendments could be made by creating a subsection out of existing text in section 141-

E as subsection (a), by inserting "(a)" on page 12, line 11, immediately following the word "functions." Additionally, we are happy to work with you on developing more specific standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

POSSIBLE STANDARDS FOR THE GRANTS IN THIS BILL

Applications for grants shall be made to the department and shall contain the information as shall be required by rules adopted pursuant to this part. At a minimum, the applicant shall:

- (1) Be licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal, state, or county statutes, regulations, rules, or ordinances, to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
- (2) Provide a detailed plan outlining the scope, objectives, and projected impact of the proposed project and a clear breakdown of how grant funds will be used;
- (3) Agree to use state funds exclusively for the purposes of this program;
- (4) Demonstrate the capability and capacity to properly carry out the proposed project and use the grant for the purposes of the program;
- (5) Comply with all applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law;
- (6) Agree not to use state funds for purposes of entertainment or perquisites;
- (7) Comply with any additional requirements as the department may prescribe;
- (8) Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county statutes, regulations, rules, and ordinances;
- (9) Agree to indemnify and save harmless the State of Hawaii and its officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims arising out of or resulting from activities carried out or projects undertaken with funds provided hereunder and procure

sufficient insurance to provide this indemnification if requested to do so by the department; and

- (10) Agree to make available to the department all records the applicant may have relating to the grant, to allow state agencies to monitor the applicant's compliance with this section."



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Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
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February 13, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 3162
RELATING TO STRATEGIC FOOD RESERVES

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
3:10 PM

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

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports the intent of SB 3162, which establishes the Strategic Food Reserves Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. The measure creates purchasing requirements for locally produced crops and food stored in the reserve, establishes the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee, creates the Agricultural Market Development Grant Program and a dedicated special fund, sets an implementation timeline, requires annual reporting to the Legislature, and appropriates funds to support the program.

Establishing strategic food reserves on each island is an ambitious and forward-looking concept. Strengthening local production, expanding processing capacity, utilizing forward contracts, and integrating value-added infrastructure such as regional kitchens and high-pressure processing technologies can help Hawai'i build a more resilient food system capable of responding to natural disasters, supply chain disruptions, and other emergencies.

HFB strongly supports efforts to create stable and predictable markets for local producers. Forward contracting, in particular, can provide farmers with the certainty needed to expand acreage, invest in infrastructure, and increase production of priority crops.

As this measure advances, careful attention to implementation will be critical. Aggregation, cold storage, inventory rotation, food safety compliance, transportation logistics, and workforce capacity are complex operational components that require specialized expertise and existing infrastructure. Hawai'i already has private-sector

distributors and logistics operators with significant experience in cold-chain management, product rotation, traceability, and regulatory compliance. Leveraging and integrating this existing expertise will be essential to ensuring that the program is efficient, fiscally responsible, and operationally successful.

Given the inclusion of locally produced proteins and priority crops, HFB respectfully suggests that the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee consider livestock industry representation. If aquaculture and seafood products are contemplated within the reserve framework, representation from that sector may also be appropriate.

Ensuring balanced producer input across crop, livestock, and aquatic sectors will help the program reflect Hawai'i's full agricultural landscape while maintaining a manageable advisory structure.

HFB looks forward to continued collaboration to refine and implement this important initiative in a manner that strengthens local agriculture, enhances food security, and builds long-term resilience for all communities across the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Officers

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Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

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Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

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

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports the intent of SB3162.**

SB3162 establishes the Hawaii Strategic Food Reserves Program and an Agricultural Market Development Grant Program. While the intent of a strategic reserve is vital, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity is not the appropriate entity to manage physical warehouse infrastructure.

SB3162 should adopt a Vendor-Managed Approach where the State compensates distributors, grocers, food hubs and local vendors to maintain inventory held above normal commercial demand that is rotated daily to ensure freshness and zero waste. A vendor-managed system for local food is only possible if food hubs have the physical infrastructure to handle it. Grant funding should be prioritized for the "missing middle" infrastructure, refrigerated warehouses and dry storage, that allows various actors to participate in the strategic reserve.

Without specific language, a vendor-managed system will default to big-box retailers and distributors who have the largest existing warehouse footprints but source their goods from the mainland, resulting solely in the State subsidizing the storage of imported food. SB3162 must mandate local procurement thresholds and prioritize "Local Food Vendors" who aggregate from Hawaii-based smallholders.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



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Executive Officers

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

TO: Committee on Agriculture and Environment
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 13, 2026

TIME: 3:10pm

RE: SB3162 Relating to Strategic Food Reserves

Position: Support

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

HFIA is in support of this measure to establish the Hawaii strategic food reserves program to facilitate and monitor strategic food reserves on each island of the State. As the measure notes, food insecurity rates are at alarming high levels around the state. High food insecurity and other factors mean that only a small percentage of Hawaii households have the recommended two weeks food supply on hand in case of emergency.

Working with local food producers, manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and retailers before a disaster strikes is an essential component to statewide preparedness.

As part of this program in addition to establishing strategic food reserves, we urge the state to create memorandums of understanding with the private sector partners in the food systems who are expected to respond when there is an emergency.

We believe this measure is an important step in the right direction to improve disaster preparedness and resilience for our state.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

SB3162
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Friday, February 13, 2026, 3:10 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB3162** which establishes the Strategic Food Reserve Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

The cattle industry is a key player in providing a high-quality local protein. It is important to keep these operations producing beef, as they can contribute to the food reserves. This program is in line with the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council's efforts to streamline the process for ranchers to provide beef to communities, whether as a donation to or purchase from a food bank regularly, or during an extreme crisis situation. Working out these logistics will help ensure beef is accessible to local families. All ranchers can contribute to this, even cow/calf operations that primarily send calves to the continent for finishing. We support this effort to establish a program that supports infrastructure to streamline this process.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Think B.I.G.

www.thinkbighawaii.org

February 11, 2026

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Conference Room 224
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: STRONG SUPPORT for SB 3162 — Strategic Food Reserves

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

Think B.I.G. Hawai'i, a Big Island nonprofit dedicated to community resilience through renewable energy, local agriculture, and sustainable systems, strongly supports the Strategic Food Reserve Act.

This legislation addresses one of Hawai'i's most critical vulnerabilities: our extreme dependence on imported food.

Hawai'i imports approximately 90% of its food, leaving our residents dangerously exposed to supply chain disruptions, natural disasters, and global instability. Only 12% of Hawai'i households maintain the recommended two-week emergency food supply. On Hawai'i Island, the food insecurity rate exceeds 40%—the highest in the state. Recent federal cuts to SNAP benefits have only intensified this crisis for our most vulnerable residents.

The Strategic Food Reserve Act provides a powerful solution: establishing revolving food reserves on each island, while also **creating markets for local farmers** through forward contracts, supporting processing infrastructure, and prioritizing traditional Hawaiian crops like kalo, 'uala, and 'ulu. By requiring significant local purchase percentages, this bill simultaneously addresses emergency preparedness and agricultural economic development.

This legislation enjoys broad bipartisan appeal because it addresses fundamental security concerns that transcend political ideology. Whether the threat is a hurricane, a pandemic-related supply disruption, shipping strike, or geopolitical conflict affecting Pacific trade routes, Hawai'i's isolation makes food security an urgent matter of public safety.

We cannot continue to operate without a meaningful buffer against serious disruption.

Think B.I.G. Hawai'i is actively working on complementary food security initiatives on the Big Island, including our "Prep, Set & Forget" distributed household food production

program. The Strategic Food Reserve Act would provide the institutional framework and agricultural market support that makes community-level efforts like ours more effective and sustainable.

We urge your strong support for this critical legislation. Mahalo for your commitment to protecting Hawai'i's residents and supporting our local farmers.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TH', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tam Hunt

Board member, Think B.I.G. Hawai'i

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 4:01:11 PM

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

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

Comments:

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

My name is Susan RobertsEmery , as Co-Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i , we stand in Strong Support of SB3162 . This is a very strong and thorough bill. Well written and ready to move us forward with sustainability on our Islands.

It Establishes the Strategic Food Reserve Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. Establishes purchasing requirements for crops stored at a strategic food reserve. Establishes the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee. Establishes the Agricultural Market Development Grant Program. Establishes the Strategic Food Reserves Program Special Fund. Requires DAB and the Strategic Food Reserves Advisory Committee to submit annual reports to the Legislature, respectively. Establishes a timeline for DAB's implementation of the Strategic Food Reserves Program. Appropriates funds

Thank you for your consideration on this important legislation. Please support SB 3162.

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 7:05:23 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Garvey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Food security is very important on these islands. At one point in time 90% of food on the islands was produced on the islands, now it's the opposite way and 90% of our food is imported. With Trump's presidency, everything seems to get more unstable, politically, economical and the world as a whole. Having food security seems vital to human life out here. Please vote yes on this bill. Think about your children and running out of food on a remote island. Mahalo

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 3:18:14 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

We need to enhance our states' resiliency. This measure is a strong and positive proposal that will advance our goals. I **STRONGLY** urge the committee to **SUPPORT** this proposal.

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:49:04 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff regan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I highly support this bill. As someone who is in to food sovereignty this is very important

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 3:27:11 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
penny levin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3162

Relating to Strategic Food Reserves

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of SB 3162, the Strategic Food Reserve Act.

Hawai'i imports approximately 90% of its food. Current estimates indicate that the islands have less than a week of food supply available at any given time. In the event of a major natural disaster, port closure, economic disruption, or geopolitical crisis, our communities would face immediate and severe consequences.

As an island state in the middle of the Pacific, we are uniquely vulnerable to supply chain interruptions. The COVID-19 pandemic, extreme weather events, and global instability have made it abundantly clear that food security is not theoretical — it is an urgent and practical necessity.

SB 3162 takes a proactive and responsible approach by requiring the State to establish strategic food reserves on each island. By incorporating increasing percentages of locally grown food and implementing a regular rotation system to maintain freshness, this bill strengthens both emergency preparedness and long-term agricultural resilience.

This legislation would:

- Provide a critical buffer during disasters and supply disruptions
- Strengthen Hawai'i's local agricultural economy
- Create stable markets for farmers through guaranteed purchase mechanisms
- Reduce environmental impacts associated with imported food
- Improve statewide food security and community resilience

I live on the Big Island of Hawai'i and serve as founder of the nonprofit Heart of Humanity. Through our work in land stewardship and ethical farming, I have witnessed firsthand the power of community-based agriculture. When local farmers are supported and land is cultivated with integrity, communities become healthier, more resilient, and more connected.

If Hawai'i invested more intentionally in growing and reserving our own food, we would not only protect ourselves in times of crisis — we would truly thrive together.

Food security is foundational to public safety, health, and economic stability. We cannot afford to wait for a crisis to reveal the fragility of our current system. SB 3162 offers a practical and forward-thinking solution that will increase resilience for all residents of Hawai'i.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB 3162.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lillian Hardie Burstow
Big Island, Hawai'i
Founder, Heart of Humanity

SB-3162

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 11:35:41 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Selesitina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Selesitina Scanlan, and I strongly support the bill establishing Hawai'i's Strategic Food Reserve Program.

For an island state that relies heavily on imported food, building a secure and reliable food reserve is essential. This bill strengthens Hawai'i's resilience by supporting local farmers, creating structured emergency food supply, and ensuring the state is better prepared for disasters or supply chain disruptions. The advisory committee, grant program, and reporting requirements also provide accountability and long-term stability.

I know critical food security is for island communities. This bill moves Hawai'i toward greater self-reliance and protects families during times of crises.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.