



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 5, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 3296, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

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

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 3296, SD1, which establishes a Conservation and Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers operate in diverse tropical environments that require locally adapted conservation practices. A voluntary, incentive-based program that supports soil health, water conservation, erosion control, composting, and other stewardship practices can strengthen long-term agricultural productivity while protecting natural resources.

By providing training opportunities, cost-share support, and infrastructure funding, this pilot program offers practical tools to help producers implement conservation practices that improve resilience and sustainability. Investments in soil health and water management directly contribute to the long-term viability of Hawai'i agriculture.

HFB appreciates that this measure establishes a pilot program with reporting requirements, allowing the Legislature to evaluate outcomes and refine the program before broader expansion.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting Hawai'i's agricultural community.



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

SB3296 SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

March 5, 2026, 12:04 PM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB3296 SD1** which establishes the Conservation and Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Well-managed cattle can contribute to increased soil health, in turn improving water retention and carbon sequestration. This program provides incentives, technical assistance, and education for these practices, which will make it more feasible for a wider range of producers to adopt practices that benefit the land. While we appreciate the federal funding program that provide these services, we have found that they are tailored to continental practices and costs. A state run program would be beneficial to Hawaii's producers. We have many who have shovel ready projects, but could utilize funding and technical support to get the job done.

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





PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || www.agstewardshiphawaii.org

March 5, 2026

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

Re: Testimony in Strong Support of SB3296, Relating to Agriculture

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support of SB3296**, which establishes an Agriculture and Conservation Environmental Stewardship Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB).

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the viability and sustainability of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers through technical assistance, resource coordination, business education, and policy support. For over 25 years, we have worked alongside producers to advance conservation agriculture and stewardship across Hawai'i's working lands. This work builds off the coalition of farmers, ranchers, forestry managers and TA service providers that participated in the federally funded, and then cut, **Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities initiative**. That effort acknowledged that **producers bear real costs when investing** in soil health, water protection, carbon sequestration, and other conservation practices that generate public environmental benefits. SB3296 reflects a similar understanding at the state level: stewardship on working lands deserves and requires direct, practical support.

The pilot would provide coordinated training, technical assistance, cost-share, and small-scale infrastructure support statewide and **is based on the successful DaBux program model**, administered by DAB and The Food Basket over the past five years.

We also recognize that there are related proposals under consideration this session, which underscores the broad agreement that coordinated agricultural investment is necessary. We welcome thoughtful deliberation on how best to advance these efforts in a fiscally responsible and effective way.

Mahalo for your leadership and consideration,

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator
Email: amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org,
Tel: 808 429 5310

SB-3296-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 7:02:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/5/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!!!

Good idea that will lead to many improvements.

Mahalo!

SB-3296-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 8:32:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/5/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor McKenzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this testimony in strong support of HB1953/SB3296.

As a conservation planner and ‘āina restoration program manager, this bill is particularly important to myself and to my producer partners. The grant funding my work will end soon and with the way the world is going, it doesn't look like it will be extended nor will there be other opportunities to continue this work. By funding this pilot program, you will enable people like me to provide coordinated training, technical assistance, cost-share opportunities, and on-farm infrastructure support across Hawai‘i. By doing so, the State has an opportunity to step directly into the field alongside agricultural producers, sharing the cost of conservation investments that benefit the entire community- also, increasing the number of positions in the green jobs field.

SB3296 establishes a pilot program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to provide:

- Training and technical assistance
- Cost-share support for conservation practices
- On-farm infrastructure funding, such as compost systems and irrigation improvements

By filling gaps in existing programs, this bill supports small, diversified farms and ‘āina-based stewardship practices often underserved by federal initiatives. This bill is a practical, evidence-based approach to supporting Hawai‘i’s working lands today. We cannot wait for long-term institutional reforms before assisting the farmers who feed our communities.

Mahalo for your leadership and consideration,

TK McKenzie, Honolulu



March 3rd 2026

To: Chair Dela Cruz Donovan , Vice Chair Moriwaki Sharon and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Subject: **SD1 3296**

Aloha,

As a member of the Hawai'i Food+ team, I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 3296 SD1. This bill establishes a Conservation and Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and appropriates funding to support its implementation. As an island state, our food systems and public health are dependent on healthy soils, clean water, and resilient ecosystems. Many federal systems regarding agriculture and stewardship programs are created to fit continental contexts. These federal systems are not applicable to 'āina-based practices, tropical agroecosystems, and the cultural relationships to land stewardship. This program would help implement 'āina based stewardship that improves our island's environmental health and food security. Aspects of this program include, small stipends for farmers who complete conservation training, and attend workshops on conservation and climate smart agriculture. This bill has a cost share aspect where the government helps pay for the conservation practices. This will give farmers the tools they need to improve environmental health and increase the abundance of food locally grown on the islands.

With the amendments made, this bill also partners with nonprofits that work toward 'āina-based stewardship. The amendments clearly outline how the program will operate and ensure that the resources needed for these goals reach farmers. These amendments require a report to the Legislature that highlights the program's impacts, including acres restored, conservation practices used, and environmental benefits such as improved soil health and water health. This keeps the program accountable for innovation toward improving the health of our islands and strengthening food security.

Mahalo,
Carlin McFadden & 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.