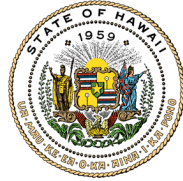


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

**FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2026
10:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 120
URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND
PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND
HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS.**

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 120 that urges the State to consider the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and adopt policies that further sustain rangeland health and pastoralist livelihoods. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports this resolution.

The Department has long recognized the importance of Hawaii's ranchers to Hawaii's economy. Further, their sustained land management, spanning over generations, has balanced economic utilization and land stewardship practices before they even had names attached to them. The industry is organized, articulate, effective and tough when it needs to be. We look forward to collaborating with other agencies and organizations in promoting education, research, outreach, and consideration of policies related to rangeland management and conservation throughout Hawaii

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this resolution.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Friday, April 17, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

By

Parwinder Grewal, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience

And

Vassilis Syrmos, PhD
Interim Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 120 – URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS.

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

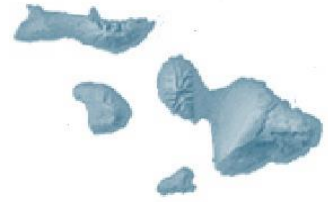
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 120 which encourages state agencies, the University of Hawai'i, and organizations across the State to engage in activities that promote education, research, and outreach related to rangeland management and adopt policies that will further conserve rangelands and protect the livelihoods of the State's ranchers.

The University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience (CTAHR) recognizes the value of Hawai'i's rangelands and the ranchers that steward them. Through research and Extension initiatives CTAHR is committed to working with ranchers and private and public land management agencies to assure the ecological, economic, and cultural significance of rangelands in Hawai'i are sustained. Our faculty, through a diversity of program areas, conduct research and provide Extension outreach across many areas directly aligned with the purpose of SCR 120 to engage in activities that promote education, research, and outreach related to rangeland management. CTAHR appreciates the contributions by ranchers, pastoralists and land managers to the state economy, paniolo culture and ecological stewardship of rangelands.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SCR 120.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAI'I 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

TO: Representative Cory M. Chun, Chair
Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: **April 17, 2026**

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SCR120, RELATING TO RANGELANDS;
PASTORALISTS; POLICIES; SUSTAINABILITY**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure.

SCR120 urges the state to consider the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and adopt policies that further sustain rangeland health and pastoralist livelihoods.

We **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

- 1. Rangelands provide broad public benefits, not just grazing land:**
Hawai'i's rangelands support watershed health, carbon sequestration, habitat preservation, wildfire mitigation, weed control, scenic beauty, and cultural values, so protecting them serves the whole state, not only ranchers.
- 2. Pastoralists are essential land stewards and local food producers:**
Ranchers and pastoralists manage open space, maintain productive landscapes, and help preserve a long-standing agricultural tradition that contributes to Hawai'i's resilience and food security.
- 3. State policy should help ranchers adapt to drought and climate stress:**
Drought has become more severe in Hawai'i, creating major costs from forage loss, supplemental feed, and livestock impacts, so supportive policies and decision tools are needed to keep rangelands healthy and pastoralist livelihoods viable

Mahalo for your consideration.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892

SCR120

Urging the State to Consider the Importance of Rangelands and Pastoralists and Adopt Policies that Further Sustain Rangeland Health and Pastoralist Livelihoods

House Agriculture & Food Sustainability (AGR)
Committee Hearing
Friday, April 17, 2026 – 10:30 AM

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Chun and Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House AGR Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 40 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

In Hawaii, more than 1,000,000 acres are classified as rangelands. Of that, Hawaii ranchers raise livestock on over 750,000 acres and contribute more than \$50 million annually to the State's economy. Ranchers, also known as pastoralists, are stewards of these lands. As stewards, they have deep knowledge of the terrain, environment and a practical approach to managing their livestock.

Support for this measure acknowledges the State's recognition of the importance and value of rangelands and the support for the perpetuation of the paniolo tradition in rangeland management. With such acknowledgment, the adoption of policies to conserve rangelands and protect the livelihoods of ranchers is urged. State agencies, the University of Hawaii and other organizations are requested to promote, research, and conduct outreach for rangeland management.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration of this important acknowledgment.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cory M. Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

SCR 120

URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS.

April 17, 2026, 10:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports SCR120** which urges the state to consider the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and adopt policies that further sustain rangeland health and pastoralist livelihoods.

Supporting rangeland stewardship and uplifting the role of ranchers means we are supporting food production, land stewardship, and the paniolo culture. Here in Hawaii, we promote legislation and programs that keep ranchers on agricultural land because of the many benefits of well-managed rangelands – fire fuel reduction, invasive species control, increased groundwater filtration, improved soil and carbon sequestration, and ultimately, the production of a high-quality protein for our community. Throughout these systems, the boots on the ground that manage them across many generations include paniolo of all ages and backgrounds. They all hold similar high-priority values – love of the land, responsibility to the animals and families they serve, and hard work.

The benefits of rangelands and ranchers are revered across the globe, as we celebrate the International Year of the Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) in 2026. We highlight the role that these systems play in food security, land stewardship, and community resilience across the world. Management may look different in different regions, but the same principles apply in caring for the land and the animals. Currently 102 countries support the IYRP. This is an opportunity to learn across regions, share challenges and successes, and uplift the next generation who seeks to contribute to utilizing livestock to manage land.



As part of the IYRP, and with support from a USDA grant, two high school students, Saige Imig and Maria Kimitch, represented Hawaii at the Society for Range Management's Annual Meeting in Monterey, CA. Maria presented "From pastures to pavement: The loss of Rangelands and agriculture." Saige presented "Tiny Pest, Tremendous Problem" about the Two-lined Spittlebug and won first place for her presentation and was voted to be President of the 2027 High School Youth Forum in Wichita Kansas. Both students gave compelling, well-prepared presentations and we're proud that they were able to represent us.

We are proud of these students for representing Hawaii so well, and ask that the legislature assist us in continuing to celebrate the positive role of rangelands by passing this resolution to recognize the International Year of the Rangelands and Pastoralists. More info can be found at <https://iyrp.info>

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



April 17th, 2026

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Representative Cory M. Chun, Chair

Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

RE: SCR 120 – URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS

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

Parker Ranch, Inc. strongly supports SCR 120, which urges the State to consider the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and to adopt policies that further sustain rangeland health.

As one of Hawai'i's largest and longest-operating ranches, Parker Ranch recognizes the essential role that ranchers (aka Paniolo) play as stewards of working lands across our state. Paniolo collectively manage nearly 750,000 acres—approximately 20% of Hawai'i's total land mass—delivering critical environmental, cultural, and economic benefits.

Well-managed rangelands provide significant public value, including wildfire fuel reduction, invasive species management, watershed protection, groundwater recharge, improved soil health, and carbon sequestration. These lands also support the production of locally raised, high-quality protein and contribute meaningfully to Hawai'i's food security and agricultural resilience.

Ranching is deeply rooted in Hawai'i's heritage. Across generations, those who care for these lands share a commitment to stewardship, responsibility, and hard work. These values connect pastoralists not only across our islands, but around the world. While practices may differ by region, pastoralists share common principles grounded in caring for the land, managing livestock responsibly, and sustaining resources for future generations.

The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 highlights the global importance of these systems. It provides an opportunity to learn across regions, share innovation, and integrate traditional knowledge with modern practices to ensure the long-term health and productivity of rangelands.

In Hawai'i, thoughtful policy support is critical to maintaining viable ranching operations and healthy working landscapes. Policies that enable continued access to land, water, infrastructure, and resources—while supporting stewardship outcomes—are essential to sustaining pastoralist livelihoods and the broader benefits they provide to our communities.

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

Sincerely,

Jacob D. Tavares
Vice President, Business Strategy & Operations
Parker Ranch, Inc.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

April 17, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SCR 120

URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND
PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND
HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 SCR 120, which urges the State to recognize the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and to adopt policies that sustain rangeland health and pastoral livelihoods.

Rangelands play a critical role in Hawai'i's agricultural landscape, supporting livestock production, watershed health, soil stability, and open space across the State. As noted in the resolution, over one million acres of Hawai'i's land are classified as rangelands, reflecting their significance to both our economy and environment.

Hawai'i's ranchers are stewards of these lands, managing over 750,000 acres of rangelands while contributing to local food production and the State's rural economy. Their work supports not only livestock production, but also the preservation of open space, protection of natural resources, and continuation of Hawai'i's paniolo heritage.

HFB appreciates that this resolution goes beyond recognition and encourages policies that support the long-term sustainability of rangelands and the livelihoods of those who manage them. Maintaining viable ranching operations is essential to preserving these lands and the ecosystem services they provide, including water resource protection, biodiversity, carbon storage, and wildfire risk management.

We also support the resolution's encouragement of education, research, and outreach related to rangeland management, as well as continued collaboration among state agencies, the University of Hawai'i, and the agricultural community.

SCR 120 appropriately recognizes the contributions of ranchers, farmers, and land managers in Hawai'i and reinforces the importance of policies that support working lands and sustainable resource management.

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

KAPĀPALA RANCH

98-1900 Hawaii Belt Rd

Pahala, HI 96777

lanipetrie@aol.com; kapapala.ranch@aol.com

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep Cory M Chun, Chair

Rep Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

SCR 120

April 17, 2026, 10:30 am

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

I **strongly support SCR 120** which urges the State to consider the importance of rangelands and pastoralists and adopt policies that further sustain rangeland health and pastoralists livelihoods.

Supporting rangeland stewardship keeps lands healthy and productive, stewarded by our ranching community. These lands not only provide food, but grazing reduces fuel loads that mitigate wildfires. As we have witnessed on Maui these fire have destroyed entire communities. Ranchers make large investments in water resources that are relied upon more and more by Federal, State, and County fire crews

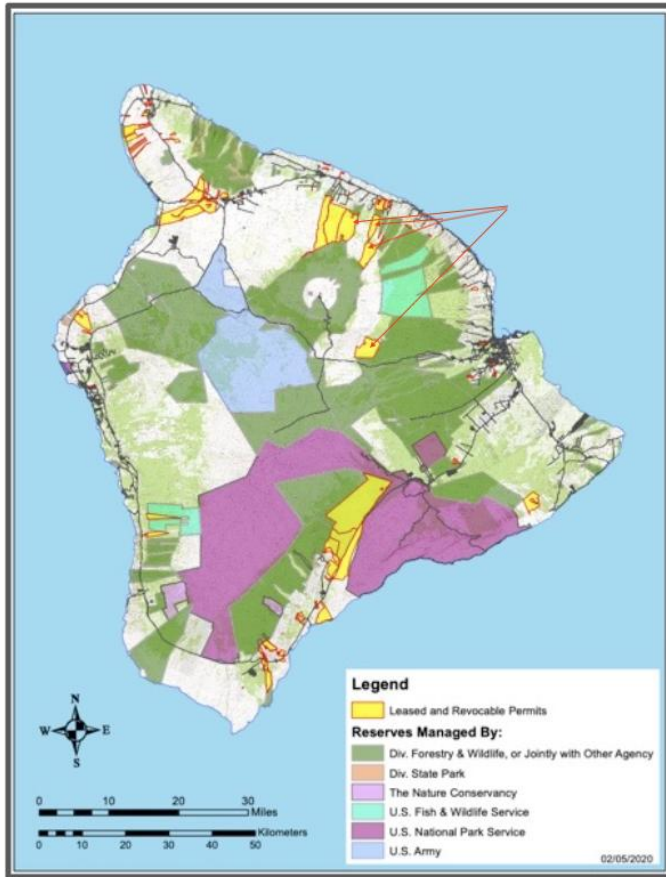
Healthy rangelands are sequestering carbon equal or greater than forests and storing it underground where it remains stable.

In the attached map please notice that the lands in yellow are all that is remaining of State pastoral leases. These lands are still being battled for today for the purpose of reforestation.

Lani C. Petrie
Managing Partner
Kapāpala Ranch



Hawaii Island Land Zones



CONTENTS

SCR-120

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 8:18:56 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SCR 120 and stand with testimony of Hawaii Cattlemen Council

SCR-120

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:33:46 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Greenwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is important to recognize the value of well managed rangeland. In Hawaii, about 750,000 acres (20%) of the State is used as rangeland and the proper stewardship of those lands translates into a suite of ecosystem services benefitting the broader community in terms of wildfire mitigation, watershed enhancement, the control of invasive species, carbon sequestration, habitat protection, and the preservation of a cultural resource and our open spaces. For generations, our ranchers have been the boots on the ground providing this stewardship function.

SCR-120

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 4:24:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SCR 120 URGING THE STATE TO CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS AND ADOPT POLICIES THAT FURTHER SUSTAIN RANGELAND HEALTH AND PASTORALIST LIVELIHOODS.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

Kula, Maui

SCR-120

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:04:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Fox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SCR120 Urging the State to Consider the Importance of Rangelands and Pastoralists and Adopt Policies that Further Sustain Rangeland Health and Pastoralist Livelihoods. Hawai'i ranchers and their well-managed rangelands contribute to local food security, a healthy economy, watershed protection, freshwater recharge, flood mitigation, invasive species prevention and control, and wildfire prevention and mitigation. Generations of ranchers have been and continue to be steadfast stewards of Hawai'i lands. In addition to managing rangelands for livestock production, many ranchers steward other natural areas and native habitats, plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth. Thank you for recognizing their critical contributions to our collective wellbeing.