



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 10:30 a.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford  
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
And  
Michael Bruno  
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Vice Chancellor for Research  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 2099 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 2099 HD1 SD1. We are in full agreement that Hawai'i must entertain alternatives to its current agricultural operations. These alternatives should add to the diversity of agricultural systems that operate in the state. There is significant potential to grow food in an urban environment. The positive outcomes of successful urban operations are several. First, the food that is being grown in an urban environment is in the population centers where the food demand exists. In fact, this is one tool for addressing food deserts in urban areas. Second, because of the location, transportation costs may be minimized. Third, there are possibilities in increasing efficiencies. However, there are down sides as well with the energy consumption being the greatest.

Vertical farming, the one option mentioned in the bill, is one component that fits into a general description of protective agriculture. Protected Ag, or “the modification of the natural environment to achieve optimal growth” is an approach that we feel is a potential future for Hawai'i. Beyond vertical farming, we also support low/high tunnels and greenhouse culture for appropriate crops.

We also support the changes made in this bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 2099 HD 1 SD1 with the caveat that it does not affect, and is in addition to, the UH budget request. We also defer to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) as per their ability to accomplish the mission objectives given the appropriated resources and their consideration of the DOA mission.