SB 166 – RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 166 relating to disaster relief for Hawai‘i County. The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM), College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) wishes to testify on a portion of the bill, Section 6, which appropriates $6,000,000 to support loans to revitalize the agriculture industry destroyed by volcanic activity. UHM/CTAHR supports the intent of this bill and we respectfully provide the following information to substantiate our position.

With approximately 50% of the papaya industry destroyed by volcanic activity, and a significant portion of other agricultural enterprises hurt by this activity, this bill provides needed loans to help the agricultural industry of the area recover and revitalize.

This bill also is related to a number of other bills in the legislature which include the development of an emergency disaster fund for agriculture and the development of a plan to double food production. The combination of these programs specific to agriculture show a strong commitment of the legislature for the economic and community health of the people and agricultural industry of the state.

With expressing that sentiment, UHM/CTAHR supports the intent of SB 166.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.