



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committees on Energy and Environmental Protection and
Agriculture

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by

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and

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HB 2834 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

Chairs Coffman and Tsuji, and members of the Committees on Energy and Environmental Protection and Agriculture: Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2834, which extends the sunset date for the Hawai'i Economic Development Task Force to June 30, 2014. I am Sylvia Yuen, Interim Dean and Director of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

The 2010 Hawai'i State Legislature adopted Act 73, which established the Hawai'i Economic Development Task Force to assist our state in becoming food and energy self-sufficient by facilitating and accelerating the adoption and completion of renewable energy projects, energy efficiency programs, and local agricultural infrastructure and development projects, as well as other needed measures.

As is mandated in Act 73, as Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources I serve on the Task Force, along with the directors of the Departments of Agriculture, Business Economic Development & Tourism, and Land and Natural Resources; directors of the economic development boards from each county; and representatives from various sectors of the community—business, union, and foundations. Although the Task Force has performed admirable work over the past two years, as demonstrated by its reports to the Legislature, it requires more time to fully address its important charge. The diverse perspectives of current members enrich the work of the Task Force, and they have now acquired both breadth and depth of knowledge relating to food and energy that is difficult to replicate.

The Legislature indicated earlier that it was in the best interests of the state to build its capacity for energy and food self-sufficiency to protect the health and vitality of Hawai'i's people and environment. This is a worthy goal, and the extension of the sunset date for the Hawai'i Economic Development Task Force will ensure that a dedicated and knowledgeable group of people will be available to assist in this important task.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2834.