



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture
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By

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And

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SB 2659 – RELATING TO INDUSTRIAL HEMP

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2659, which establishes an industrial hemp pilot program to allow the cultivation of industrial hemp and distribution of its seed in Hawai'i through limited activities by the board of agriculture for purposes of agricultural or academic research; and appropriates funds for Department of Agriculture staff to assist in registration of industrial hemp licensees.

The University of Hawai'i strongly supports economic development of the agricultural sector, including research and development efforts with new crops and cropping systems in order to strengthen and diversity agriculture in the State of Hawai'i. As authorized by the Hawai'i State Legislature, and by the federal Farm Bill, the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, recently completed a pilot study of industrial hemp cultivation in Hawai'i, and demonstrated that certain strains of industrial hemp can grow quickly to significant height under Hawai'i conditions.

SB 2659 builds upon this pilot study to allow additional industrial hemp research throughout the state, by parties under license and direction by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. Although we defer to the Department of Agriculture on the fiscal and management implications of SB 2659, we support the intent to develop a new crop for Hawai'i.