



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 8:30 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 1102 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

Chair Creagan and Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1102 HD1 relating to agriculture education and establishes and appropriates funds for the P-20 agriculture education coordinator position within the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). This bill also outlines the duties of the coordinator and P-20 agriculture education working group. UHM/CTAHR supports the intent of this bill and this testimony is in large part the same submitted for the original bill with the exception of suggested amendments included herein.

- Preschool through grade 20 (higher education) agriculture education is key to the development of future farmers and to a society that values and understands the vital role of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems in advancing personal, local, and global well-being and food security.
- UHM/CTAHR convened a working group under Senate Resolution 80 (2015) and developed a coordinated framework of support for preschool through post-secondary (P-20) agriculture education and a plan for implementation.
- The outcome of the working group was the consensus that a P-20 Agriculture Education Coordinator position is needed within UHM/CTAHR for the purpose of overseeing ongoing communication and collaboration of the P-20 Agriculture Education Working Group and spearheading the Implementation Plan that includes:
  - Teacher Development: Teacher training in agriculture and food systems education at all levels (P-20) for those preparing to become teachers (“pre-service teachers”), as well as additional professional development for those already in classrooms (“in-service teachers”).

- Curricular Integration: Integrating agriculture education into the core curriculum in all subject areas at all levels (P-20).
- Agriculture Educators: Helping to establish and fund positions at the state, community, and school levels that directly support teacher development and curricular integration around agriculture and food systems.

The report highlights the large number of organizations working in this area. What is evident is the amount of overlap and lack of coordination between organizations. More effective effort on this topic could be had if there was some level of coordination among groups; and this position could also seek to provide that.

We support the intent of this bill and offer the following suggested amendments provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Approved Budget:

- clarify that the P-20 agriculture education coordinator position is a permanent Administrative Professional Technical (APT) with UHM/CTAHR, and
- appropriates out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i the sum of \$65,000 as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020, the same sum for fiscal year 2020-2021, and the same sum for future fiscal years should the position be required.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.