



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Housing
And

Senate Committee on Education
Tuesday, January 29, 2019 at 1:15 p.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

SB 303 – RELATING TO GARDENS

Chairs Chang and Kidani, Vice Chairs Kanuha and Kim, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Committee on Education.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 303 relating to gardens in schools and communities. The bill requires that the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) should be consulted regarding best practices in gardening, including vertical gardening, aquaponics, and community gardening.

CTAHR is the home of the Cooperative Extension Service. As part of that program, it runs a statewide Master Gardener Program, has edible crop and ornamental extension agents in each county and is the home of the Pearl City Urban Garden Center, which has extensive plantings and offers extension courses that are directly related to this bill. CTAHR can provide the consultation required by the bill in the area of both gardening and aquaponics. While the extension capacity is currently limited in aquaculture, UHM/CTAHR is in the process of hiring a new extension specialist in aquaculture and the position should be filled by the time this bill goes into effect and that need is required.

In summary, CTAHR is capable and ready to collaborate with the specifics of this bill should it be passed into law.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 303.