



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

By

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And

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SB 743 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO COFFEE PEST CONTROL

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 743 SD1 HD1 relating to coffee pest control and to provide comments.

The coffee industry is the third highest valued agricultural commodity of Hawai'i. Coffee is grown on 7,100 acres in Hawai'i and has a farm gate value worth \$60,000,000, and green coffee has a value of about \$113,000,000. With the state's first detection of the Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) in 2010, and with the arrival of Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) in 2020, this important crop faces serious threats to its existence. The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' (CTAHR) Cooperative Extension Service, in partnership with the Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center, Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center, Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council, and numerous coffee grower associations such as the Hawai'i Coffee Association, have helped develop and share integrated pest management practices to the coffee growers of Hawai'i.

The estimated annual economic benefit to Hawai'i coffee growers due to the implementation of integrated pest management practices recommended by CTAHR's Cooperative Extension Service is valued at \$33,000,000 per year.

The current pesticide subsidy act has been used by a significant number of Hawai'i's coffee growers to defray the cost of pest management practices to improve the profitability of their operations. By extending the current pesticide subsidy program to June 2025, and the program manager position to June 2026, it gives Hawai'i coffee growers this management tool to improve their profitability while a variety of new management practices to contain CBB and CLR are being developed by the agricultural research community in Hawai'i and worldwide.

We support SB 743 SD1 HD1, however, we defer to HDOA on the appropriation of funds from the pesticide use revolving fund.