



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, February 2, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

By

Anna Wieczorek, Interim Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2414 – RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2414 which establishes the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA). The purpose of this working group is to develop an interagency food systems plan linked to the United Nations sustainable development goals for a more sustainable, resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of our community.

A sustainable food system is defined as one that provides sufficient food to meet current food needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that support continuous food production to generations to come. To ensure equitable access to nutritional food that is produced with minimal impact on the environment, Hawai'i needs to encourage the development of sustainable food systems. Our food systems need to serve our population's health, the environmental health of our land, and the economic health of our food and agricultural sector. Hawai'i needs to be proactive in making locally produced food widely available to our population. Similar to other parts of the world, Hawai'i is especially vulnerable to natural and human disasters that may have a negative impact on our own food security. Hence, the establishment of a working group focused on making our local food production more sustainable is one we certainly support and participate as a member.

In summary, University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources supports SB 2414 and defers to HDOA regarding the resources for the development of the interagency food systems plan and administration support.

Furthermore, we support SB 2414 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the measure.