



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education

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by

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House Concurrent Resolution 170 – REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO REVITALIZE LALAMILO STATION WITH THE COLLABORATION OF THE COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

I support the intent of HCR 170.

As Hawai'i agriculture shifts from sugarcane and pineapple plantations to diversified crops, the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) and its cooperating partners are pursuing research efforts to identify crops suited to our state's diverse agricultural environments that will provide a good return for farmers. At the Mealani Research Station in Waimea on the Big Island, we have initiated projects on high-value crops including blueberries and niche market teas that show promise for future commercial cultivation.

The Lalamilo Research Station, also in Waimea, differs climatically from Mealani. Research on high-value crops at Lalamilo will complement our successes at Mealani in developing new crops for Hawai'i's farmers. Lalamilo is a promising site for research on effective farming practices that are compatible with residential communities. Revitalization of Lalamilo Research Station will provide CTAHR, its research partners, and its stakeholders with the opportunity to pursue diversified crop research of benefit to agricultural producers and their neighbors.

At this time, we are unable to make commitments or implement plans regarding Lalamilo Research Station because the Executive Order under which UH once held the land is no longer in effect, and we have not received title to the land from the Department of Land and Natural Resources. In addition, a charter school is currently housed at Lalamilo Research Station, which prevents our use of part of the land parcel and limits the agricultural practices (for example, the spraying of pesticides) that we can apply there.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.