



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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by
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HB 1221, HD2, SD1, Relating to Agriculture

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of HB 1221, HD2, SD1 is to create a livestock revitalization program and food security program and to appropriate unspecified sums in each year of the fiscal biennium.

The University supports HB 1221, HD2, SD1.

The cost of feeding livestock in Hawai'i is significantly higher than on the mainland and threatens our local livestock producers, including cattle ranches, egg and poultry farms, dairies, and hog farms. Cattle, milk, swine, and egg production have all declined significantly since the early 1990s. We recently lost two egg farms and one dairy to increases in production costs resulting largely from the rapidly rising cost of imported feed. Our remaining producers are very vulnerable if relief is not soon made available.

Beef, eggs, milk, chicken, and pork are important staples that contribute to our food security. If our remaining cattle ranches, dairies, poultry farms, and hog farms are put out of business by the high cost of feed, we will become more dependent on imported foods and will lose the option of buying these perishable goods at their freshest. Once these producers go out of business, it will be much more expensive to restart the businesses with new facilities and replacement animals.

By reimbursing our producers of beef, milk, pork, and poultry products for part of the cost of animal feed, HB 1221, HD2, SD1 will improve our food security by helping ensure the continued availability of fresh beef, eggs, milk, chicken, and pork in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.