



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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by
James R. Gaines
Vice President for Research, University of Hawai'i

HB 1226 RELATING TO GENETICALLY MODIFIED PLANT ORGANISMS

The University of Hawaii supports the intent of HB1226.

Dozens of bills related to genetically modified organisms (GMO) have been introduced during the last several legislative sessions and during that time the legislature has chosen to hear many of these bills. However, based on expert testimony from the University of Hawaii, DBEDT, the Department of Agriculture, industry and others, it has never voted to pass any of these bills. In this session of the legislature, despite increasing global acceptance of GMO and a growing body of peer-reviewed science supporting the use of biotechnology in agriculture, many of these same bills, some masked as cultural issues, continue to make their way into the legislative process.

Although the University of Hawaii (UH) is silent on the political nature of this bill which preempts any state administrative regulatory action or county regulatory action that bans or restricts certain activities relating to genetically modified plant organisms, the UH will vigorously defend its ability to carry out its research mission and will continue to oppose legislation on appropriate topics that is not supported by science and fact. The UH thanks the legislature, and in particular the House Committee on Agriculture, for its continued support of science-based policy for the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.