



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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House Committee on Agriculture
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by

Maria Gallo, Dean and Director
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 486 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** the intent of HB 486 which appropriates funds to operate and implement the Future Farmers of America and 4-H programs in Hawai'i.

The 4-H program is a part of our college extension outreach activities and is one of Hawai'i's oldest extension programs. It involves support for 4-H clubs all over the state with currently about 12,000 children participating. Hawai'i 4-H is affiliated with the National 4-H Council and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. With children ranging from ages of about 5 to 19, 4-H is an important youth education and leadership development program involving hundreds of volunteer adult leaders who are supervised and assisted by CTAHR 4-H extension agents. Funding cuts have forced the reduction in University staff assisting the program, which have reduced the educational opportunities through 4-H to children statewide. Additional funding appropriated through HB 486 would help to restore and expand these educational opportunities.

The Future Farmers of America program is associated with the Hawai'i Department of Education and is run out of selected High Schools around the state. While CTAHR has an interest in the FFA program and has contributed some minor support to FFA, it is primarily run by DOE. CTAHR supports FFA since many High School students interested in agriculture go on to pursue further education in our college.

The current draft of HB 486 indicates that financial support would be provided to FFA and to 4-H, with the resources to go to DOE (section 2) and CTAHR (section 3). We suggest that to better align program responsibilities with resources, it would make sense to delete mention of 4-H in Section 2 and delete FFA from Section 3. Therefore, DOE would receive support for FFA in Section 2 and CTAHR would receive support for 4-H in Section 3.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports the bill provided it does not adversely affect our UH priorities as set in our budget request.