



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture

And

Senate Committee on Education  
Friday, March 18, 2016 at 2:55 p.m.

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Maria Gallo, Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 1997 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Gabbard and Kidani, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Harimoto, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture, and Senate Committee on Education, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1997, which implements the recommendation of the Hawai'i agriculture workforce advisory board to create an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency.

HB 1997 will implement the recommendation of the Hawai'i agriculture workforce advisory board, of which the Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, is a member. Although we defer to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on the fiscal and management implications of HB 1997, we believe that implementation of this recommendation will greatly assist in the development of an educated and well-trained agricultural workforce in Hawai'i, and complements such related efforts as Future Farmers of America, 4-H, and Farm to School programming.

Should HB 1997 be considered a viable approach by the legislature and the referenced departments, we will be glad to continue to work, as resources permit, with all the parties concerned to promote agricultural workforce development and further the goal of agricultural self-sufficiency in Hawai'i.