



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

S.B.#644

RELATING TO PHARMACEUTICAL CROPS

Testimony Presented Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE

February 10, 2005

By

Andrew G. Hashimoto
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i

Testimony for
Senate Bill 644

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Senate Committee on Energy, Environment, and International Affairs
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture

The Twenty-third Legislature
State of Hawai'i
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Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

I am pleased to contribute the expertise of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to the decision-making process on Senate Bill 644, which prohibits the growing of pharmaceutical crops using genetically engineered techniques.

The growing of pharmaceutical and industrial crops is already subject to stringent and comprehensive standards established by federal agencies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which regulates crop development and field production, and the Food and Drug Administration, which regulates the resulting pharmaceutical products. These crops are grown and processed separately from food crops. Under regulations established in 2003 to prevent unintentional release of pharmaceutical and industrial crop materials into the environment, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service inspects field tests of these crops at least five times during the growing season and twice during the following growing season. Current regulations facilitate ongoing auditing by APHIS throughout the field test to ensure that regulations and permit conditions are being followed. These regulations are available on the APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services Web page: www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/pharmaceutical.html.

Human health and environmental safety are best served by one set of rigorous national regulations for the production of pharmaceutical and industrial crops rather than a patchwork of regulations that vary from state to state.

SB644's blanket prohibition against the growing of pharmaceutical crops is not necessary given the stringent federal regulation of this process. Moreover, the bill has the potential to prevent Hawai'i-based institutions from participating in useful and beneficial research.

We oppose SB644. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.