



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

S.B.#645

RELATING TO GENETIC ENGINEERING

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
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Testimony for
Senate Bill 645

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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
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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 645, which requires a biotech company that sells a genetically engineered organism to provide written disclosure of possible risks from the use of such an organism.

During the development of a GE crop, USDA regulates its interstate movement and field testing. For a GE crop to be deregulated, USDA must find that its release will not adversely affect non-target (i.e., non-pest) organisms or the environment. For GE crops that produce biological pesticides, EPA establishes the level of pesticide that is safe for the environment and for human consumption. If the GE crop is to be consumed by people or animals, FDA participates in the regulatory process, determining whether the GE crop is substantially equivalent to conventional varieties of the same crop in terms of nutritional value and toxicity.

There is no conclusive scientific evidence to indicate that the process of genetic engineering creates any greater risks for consumers or the environment than does the process of conventional breeding. By the time a genetically engineered organism is deregulated and made available for sale in the U.S., it has already been found by one or more federal agencies to pose no greater risk than conventionally bred organisms. The additional level of state regulation that SB645 adds to these federal regulations is unnecessary and redundant.

We oppose SB645.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.