



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Comments for
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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by
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SB 681 SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports Senate Bill 681 Senate Draft 1, which would establish a food security task force to develop an emergency food plan for the State of Hawai'i. This plan would address certain food security issues resulting from an emergency, catastrophic event or quarantine. If enacted, Senate Bill 681 would establish a temporary food security task force within the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center (NDPTC) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa for administrative purposes. The NDPTC was officially opened in 2010. Funded by FEMA, the NDPTC develops and delivers training and educational programs related to homeland security and disaster management, with a specific focus on natural hazards, coastal communities, and the special needs of islands and territories. It is a member of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), which has seven nationally recognized members, who collectively work to better prepare federal, state, local, tribal, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

Given the isolation of the Hawaiian Islands, it is vital for the State to have an emergency food plan that addresses food security issues resulting from an event that leaves the State completely self-reliant to meet the food needs of its citizens. The task force that would be established by Senate Bill 681 SD1, is highly inclusive—drawing members from State government, the University of Hawai'i, the military and private associations and organizations. The report to be developed would likewise be highly inclusive—identifying all viable methods of achieving self-sufficiency, including emergency farming, commercial fishing, and emergency food drops.