



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
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by

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and

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SB 2039 HD1 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2039 HD1, which appropriates funds to the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i, for its cooperative extension service.

We strongly support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

The Legislature and the people of Hawai'i have an increasing sense of urgency with respect to food security. This includes a need for accelerated training to assist new farmers, with an emphasis on farming practices that will decrease Hawai'i's need for imported and expensive farming inputs; and a concomitant need to ensure that appropriate good agriculture practices are followed and safe food reaches our plates. In order to reduce our reliance on imported food, and also ensure that farming in Hawai'i remains a viable occupation, our farmers need to be well-trained in both farm/ranch production methods and in practices that will ensure the safety of the food they produce without increasing production costs unreasonably.

As is stated in Committee Report HSCR2065-14, SB 2039 HD1 supports the Cooperative Extension Service's efforts to provide effective outreach services to the agricultural community throughout the state in the face of increasing needs, while UH CTAHR explores additional, long-term sources of funding.

As reported in HSCR2065-14, an amount of \$520,000 would fund the following Cooperative Extension positions in each county:

- (1) One full-time (1.0 FTE) livestock agent in Maui County;
- (2) One full-time (1.0 FTE) food crops agent in City and County of Honolulu;
- (3) One full-time (1.0 FTE) sustainable agricultural agent in Hawaii County; and
- (4) One full-time (1.0 FTE) sustainable agricultural agent in Kauai County.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express our strong support for SB 2039 HD1.