

Resolution 21-79, CD1 Testimony

MISC. COM. 301

Personal Testimony
Submitted to City and County of Honolulu City Council
Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 10:00am
By Janel Yamamoto
Support of Resolution 21-79, CD1

Dear Council Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Janel Yamamoto and I am the current Director of GoFarm Hawai'i. I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in support of Resolution 21-79 CD1, which seeks to establish a grant program to support local agriculture through the Office of Economic Revitalization.

GoFarm Hawai'i (previously named the Agribusiness Incubator Program) has been providing business consulting services to farmers throughout the state since 2003. In 2012, in response to the lack of new farmer development, a beginning farmer training program called GoFarm Hawai'i was started in Windward O'ahu. Since then, the training program has grown to include five farmer training sites across the state (two on O'ahu) and one agricultural technician training program at the Waiawa Correctional Facility. The beginning farmer training program has graduated over 400 individuals statewide since 2012 (60% of them on the island of O'ahu). Many of our graduates have started small farms or found work supporting the agricultural industry. As an extramurally funded program, GoFarm Hawai'i relies solely on grants and donations to support its work.

In 2020, GoFarm Hawai'i was the recipient of CARES Act funding through the City & County of Honolulu. The funding was vital in allowing the program to 1) support our local farmers with business assistance and 2) offer agricultural workforce development training. In the past year, GoFarm Hawai'i has seen a tremendous increase in demand for farmer training on O'ahu. For our current cohorts on the island, 234 individuals participated in our introductory session, with 103 applying for 25 openings. Since June 2020, 413 individuals have asked to be notified about our next recruitment period. With individuals currently willing to support our agricultural industry, investing in our farmers and programs that support them are critical in growing this industry and increasing our local food security. To ensure the continued growth of the local agricultural industry, support from our local government to increase food and farm production, innovation, and efficiency is essential.

In conclusion, I respectfully request that the Council and Mayor approve this resolution that will help build and strengthen the island's agriculture industry. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Mahalo,
Janel Yamamoto



Director, GoFarm Hawai'i
janelyamamoto@gmail.com
Personal Testimony



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 5, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

UluPono Initiative supports Resolution 21-079 CD 1 Proposed FD 1, Urging the Mayor to establish a grant program to support local agriculture through the Office of Economic Revitalization.

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the Council:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at UluPono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

UluPono supports Resolution 21-079 CD 1 Proposed FD 1, which urges the City and County Administration, through the Office of the Mayor and the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER), to develop a grant program aimed at supporting local agriculture.

The City and County of Honolulu's OER has played a critical role in responding to the pandemic by providing much-needed resources to ensure O'ahu has a stable food supply to serve the needs of our community and our local producers. Although efforts have allowed some local farmers and ranchers to survive, the challenges of the pandemic remain for businesses and the public. Hawai'i has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, the ninth highest poverty rate in the nation, a food system that imports 90% of its supply, and food costs that are 82% higher than the national average. Over the last year, increased unemployment claims have intensified fears and uncertainty around access to the basic necessity of food. Adding to this perfect storm is the threat of a literal one as hurricane season nears. We would be gambling with lives to assume a pandemic is the only crisis Hawai'i may face in the coming months.

While our community begins its economic recovery, it is prudent to consider how local agriculture can help diversify the economy with increased local food production for local consumption and expand agricultural workforce opportunities for those seeking employment. Local farmers serve as a lifeline. They are our greatest defense against food

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

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insecurity and our greatest hope for future resiliency. They need our support as much as we need theirs.

We recognize that you face many difficult decisions this year to balance the budget in the midst of this economic crisis, but we hope that this support for local agriculture can be considered.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

***Note: Ulupono Initiative values this measure before the Council today and appreciates the opportunity to testify; however, we are unable to attend in person due to concerns around COVID-19. Thank you for your understanding.**

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 8:26 PM
Subject: Council Testimony

Written Testimony

Name Mahealani Cypher
Phone 18082264195
Email malamapono744@aol.com
Meeting Date 05-05-2021
Council/PH Committee Council
Agenda Item Res. 21-79, CD1 - grant program for local agriculture
Your position on the matter Support
Representing Organization Organization
Ko`olau Foundation

Written Testimony The Ko`olau Foundation is in strong support of Resolution 21-79, CD1, which would urge the Mayor to establish a grant program to help local farmers become more sustainable and increase our island's food sustainability. Because our organization's focus is on preserving and perpetuating the rich history and heritage of the island's native people, we urge special support for taro farming and restoration - and food production - of all available fishponds on O`ahu.

Testimony Attachment

Accept Terms and Agreement 1

IP: 192.168.200.67



EAST OAHU COUNTY FARM BUREAU

910 CALIFORNIA AVE., WAHIAWA, HI 96786

May 3, 2021

Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Councilmember Esther Kia'āina, Vice Chair
Honolulu City Council
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813-3077

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kia'āina, and Members of the City Council,

The East O'ahu County Farm Bureau, which represents approximately 420 farmers and supporters of agriculture from Waimanalo to Kahuku, **strongly supports** Resolution 21-79, which would establish a grant program to support local agriculture. We also support the proposed floor draft which would urge the City Administration to buy and use locally grown food to the maximum extent possible.

East O'ahu County's membership includes many small-to-medium-size farmers who would like to increase production, try new crops, and/or improve their farms' efficiency. Modern agriculture often requires infrastructure such as greenhouses, shade houses, drip irrigation lines, aquaculture tanks, planting and harvesting machinery, and processing, packing, and storage facilities. Farmers need to satisfy increased food safety requirements, to conserve water, to reduce fertilizer input, and to protect their crops from pests and diseases while minimizing pesticide use – all while maintaining or increasing yield and quality in order to compete in the marketplace. Farmers, especially new farmers or small-to-medium-size operations, often cannot afford to build the needed facilities, buy equipment that would make their operations more efficient, or experiment with new methods. The proposed agriculture grant program would help farmers pay for some of these improvements, either by itself or as matching funds to combine with grants from other sources. We believe that the result of this investment will be more agricultural production, more hiring of farm workers, and greater food security for O'ahu. Greater City and County purchases of locally grown food would also support these aims by providing a larger market for O'ahu's agricultural production. We therefore encourage you to pass Resolution 21-79 along with the amendments proposed in the floor draft.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frederick M. Mencher".

Frederick M. Mencher
for Grant Hamachi, President
East O'ahu County Farm Bureau

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 5:00 PM
Subject: Housing and the Economy Testimony

Written Testimony

Name Forest Frizzell
Phone 8082239345
Email forestaf@gmail.com
Meeting Date 05-04-2021
Council/PH Committee Housing and the Economy
Agenda Item Resolution 21-79, CD1
Your position on the matter Support
Representing Self
Organization

Aloha Committee,

Written Testimony I stand in full support of this resolution as its written. We need to build multiple pathways to support local food production, and create mechanisms for that food to be purchased locally.

Mahalo,
Forest Frizzell

Testimony
Attachment

Accept Terms and Agreement 1

IP: 192.168.200.67

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

May 5, 2021

RESOLUTION 21-79 URGING THE MAYOR TO ESTABLISH A GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT LOCAL AGRICULTURE THROUGH THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Chairperson Waters and Members of the Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Resolution 21-79. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (the "Department") works to further expand the role of Hawaii's agricultural industry to benefit the well-being of our island society by diversifying the economy, protecting resources important for agricultural production, and gaining greater self-sufficiency in food production.

The resolution ensures the long-term viability and continued productivity of agriculture on Oahu. A County-level grant program would be a valuable opportunity for local farmers to receive resources to expand production with new crops, implement innovation and technology; and assist with the acquisition of equipment to increase farming efficiency. The Department appreciates the commitment of the City and County of Honolulu to both the County and the State's food security and resiliency, and the diversification of the local economy. The Department supports adoption of this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





Kamehameha Schools®

Honolulu City Council

Date: May 5, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

TESTIMONY

By Kau‘i Burgess

Director of Community and Government Relations

RE: Resolution 21-79, CD1, Proposed FD1 – Grant Program to Support Local Agriculture

E ka Luna Ho‘omalua Waters, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalua Kia‘āina, a me nā Lālā o ka ‘Aha o ke Kūlanakauhale a me ke Kalana o Honolulu, aloha!

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS Resolution 21-79, CD1, Proposed FD1**, urging the city administration to establish and expend funds for a grant program to support local agriculture through the Office of Economic Revitalization.

Kamehameha Schools believes that our educational mission is best achieved in a society that supports and enables the success of our learners. One significant component of such a society is a sustainable, local food system. For this reason, we have heavily invested in agriculture on our lands across Hawai‘i to contribute to the State’s Aloha+ Challenge goal of doubling local food production by 2030.

The creation of a new agricultural grants program, as encouraged by this resolution, can help reduce the significant economic barriers O‘ahu’s farmers face in diversifying their crops, innovating their practices, and acquiring equipment to increase efficiency. The successful implementation of this grants program, as one component of a more comprehensive strategy of investments and supports, will help the agricultural industry increase local food production, stimulate economic recovery, and enable greater long-term resilience.

Accordingly, we kindly request you **PASS Resolution 21-79, CD1, Proposed FD1**.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership. Mahalo nui!

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



JAMES J. NAKATANI
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
235 S. Beretania Street, Room 205
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

TESTIMONY OF JAMES J. NAKATANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
Wednesday, May 5, 2021
10:00 a.m.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

RESOLUTION NO. 21-79
URGING THE MAYOR TO ESTABLISH A GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT LOCAL
AGRICULTURE THROUGH THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Chairperson Water and Members of the City Council:

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) supports Resolution No. 21-79, which urges the mayor to establish a Grant Program to Support Local Agriculture through the Office of Economic Revitalization.

Farming is a tough business and the rising cost of inputs is making it tougher to break even let alone make a profit. One of the biggest challenge Hawaii's farmers face is cash constraints. Access to adequate capital is important for any business to prosper. For a growing or emerging farm, it's crucial. The ADC shares the same goal to increase agriculture production and supports the Council's effort to secure funding for our local farmers during these tumultuous times.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 10:39 AM
Subject: Council Testimony

Written Testimony

Name	Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi
Phone	8083862538
Email	deniseyamaguchi@hawaiiagfoundation.org
Meeting Date	05-05-2021
Council/PH Committee	Council
Agenda Item	Resolution 21-79, CD1
Your position on the matter	Support
Representing	Organization
Organization	Hawaii Agricultural Foundation
Written Testimony	
Testimony Attachment	
Accept Terms and Agreement 1	

IP: 192.168.200.67

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 12:01 PM
Subject: Housing and the Economy Testimony

Written Testimony

Name	Herb Lee
Phone	8089275646
Email	herblee@thepaf.org
Meeting Date	05-05-2021
Council/PH Committee	Housing and the Economy
Agenda Item	Resolution 21-079 CD1
Your position on the matter	Support
Representing	Organization
Organization	Pacific American Foundation
Written Testimony	
Testimony Attachment	
Accept Terms and Agreement 1	

IP: 192.168.200.67

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 5:46 PM
Subject: Council Testimony

Written Testimony

Name Ronald P Weidenbach

Phone 8084293147

Email hawaiiifish@gmail.com

Meeting Date 05-05-2021

**Council/PH
Committee** Council

Agenda Item Resolution 21-79, CD1

**Your position
on the matter** Support

**Representing
Organization** Organization

Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association

**Written
Testimony** The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association strongly supports Resolution 21-79, CD1, and Proposed FD1 for Final Passage, urging the Mayor to Establish a Grant Program to Support Local Agriculture through the Office of Economic Revitalization which will help revitalize and expand Oahu's diverse agriculture industry and help move our community towards increasing sustainability. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Testimony
Attachment**

**Accept Terms
and Agreement** 1

IP: 192.168.200.67

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 7:32 AM
Subject: Budget Testimony

Written Testimony

Name Jay Bost
Phone 9186064400
Email jbost@hawaii.edu
Meeting Date 05-11-2021
Council/PH Committee Budget
Agenda Item Resolution 21-79, CD1
Your position on the matter Support
Representing Self
Organization GoFarm Hawaii

Written Testimony I strongly support the call to increase the amount of funding offered through this program to increase food production on Oahu. Having been involved in farming and training new farmers for the past 8 years on Oahu, I see that we are at an opportune time for such investment. In particular, investment in some key high capital machinery could enable the scale up of staple crop production.

Testimony Attachment

Accept Terms and Agreement 1

IP: 192.168.200.67