RES24-243
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 552

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Dec 11, 2024 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 7

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Micah Munekata	mmunekata@ulupono.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ulupono Initiative	Support	Dec 6, 2024 @ 10:15 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kathleen M Pahinui	pahinuik001@hawaii.rr.com	96791
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Dec 7, 2024 @ 09:45 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Council Chair Waters and Council Members -

I strongly support Res 24-243 RECONVENING THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL'S AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE. It is urgently needed to help support and grow agriculture on this island. We need people focused on the greater good of the community to provide guidance to the council and administration on ag issues. Too much of our ag land is going to developers for non-ag uses and we are literally one disaster away from starvation.

I also respectfully request an ag leader from the North Shore be appointed to the Task Force. As well as one from the West Side, Waimanalo and other pockets of ag on this island. We need to hear from those who are actually farming and ranching, providing us with food. I do not support appointing people with a non-ag focus to the task force.

Mālama ʻāina,

Kathleen M. Pahinui
Waialua, North Shore, Oʻahu

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Frederick Mencher	frederickmencher@gmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
East Oahu County Farm Bureau	Support	Dec 9, 2024 @ 11:13 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brian Miyamoto	brian@hfbf.org	96759
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	Dec 10, 2024 @ 08:09 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Philamer Felicitas	philamerf@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Dec 10, 2024 @ 09:58 PM

Testimony:

The lack of food sustainability in our islands is a sign of our dependency on outside sources to feed our communities from the most economically important resource we have, the land we live on. Giving space for agricultural activities to grow in our islands is like watering the seeds that were sowed from generations before us. It paves way for economic grown and stability and allows our communities to thrive without relying on internationally sourced produce. I encourage the council to more pursue initiatives like this and n the future.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kimeona Kane	kimeonakane@gmail.com	96795
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Dec 10, 2024 @ 11:36 PM

Testimony:

Aloha kākou,

Mahalo for the opportunity to speak to this important and critical topic. Food insecurity is occurring for many of our communities and people. It is one that is linked directly to the struggle that agriculture has been facing locally for generations now. I strongly support the County in its attempt to recommit to local agriculture and urge that it be done quickly and efficiently, to address the economic, social and cultural needs of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui,

kimeona kane

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Earl Yamamoto	earl.j.yamamoto@hawaii.gov	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Department of Agriculture	Support	Dec 11, 2024 @ 06:37 AM

Email: communications@ulupono.com

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, December 11, 2024 — 10:00 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports Resolution 24-243 CD1, Reconvening the Council's Agricultural Development Task Force.

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 the 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 choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports Resolution 24-243 CD1, which reconvenes the Honolulu City Council's Agricultural Development Task Force, with a membership consisting of not more than nine and not less than five members with no term limits, to foster the growth and enhancement of agricultural activities on O'ahu.

In October 2022, Bill 10 (Land Use Regulations) decision-making was postponed primarily due to the advocacy of agricultural entities. The agriculture industry was not involved in developing the proposed bill, which contained land use changes that affect agriculture production and related activities. The bill's postponement was critical in order to allow for key agricultural stakeholder input and recommendations.

To ensure this occurred, a group of agricultural industry organizations met for three full days in early 2023 to discuss, line by line, the proposed land use regulation updates pertaining to agriculture. This group consisted of the following agricultural stakeholders: O'ahu Agriculture and Conservation Association, Kualoa Ranch, Waimanalo Agricultural Association, KoHana, Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council, Ulupono Initiative, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, East County Farm Bureau, and Kuilima Farms. Government agencies—the State of Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting and Office of Economic Revitalization—also joined the conversation to provide context and feedback to the group's comments. As agriculture producers and stakeholders, we support agriculture and accessory agriculture on AG-1 and AG-2 lands for active farm/ranch production.

The top general recommendation to the Council was to re-activate the Agriculture Task Force and Agriculture Liaison, which would meet regularly for substantive discussions about agriculture and make recommendations to the Honolulu City Council. The Task Force should also ensure the representation of small farms.

As the Council continues to consider Bill 64 (2023) and any future funding or policies related to agriculture, we commend this resolution as a progressive step to incorporate more voices from Oʻahuʻs agricultural industry in these important decisions. We believe that this Task Force will help to to address agricultural landʻs priority issues, assist with implementing the outcomes from Bill 64 (2023), and offer guidance to protect and support a vibrant and resilient agricultural industry.

We look forward to the collaborative efforts of the City and County of Honolulu and the Agricultural Development Task Force to bolster Oʻahu's agricultural future.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

EAST OAHU COUNTY FARM BUREAU
910 CALIFORNIA AVE., WAHIAWA, HI 96786

December 9, 2024

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

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kia'aina, 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 24-243, which would reconvene Honolulu's Agricultural Development Task Force. If agriculture is to remain viable on O'ahu, the City Council and the City Administration must have someplace to go for information and advice on the needs of O'ahu's farmers. The original task force, established by Resolution 04-218 and extended by later resolutions, met and made recommendations to the City Council through 2019, but has been inactive since then. Many of the concerns that existed when the Task Force was established are still present; for example: designation of important agricultural lands, outdated or inappropriate land use regulations, access to land and water at acceptable cost, and the impacts of invasive species. Meanwhile, Honolulu imports most of its food needs, and remains vulnerable to supply interruptions such as the recent East Coast longshore workers' strike. We therefore encourage the City Council to pass Resolution 24-243 and to re-establish the Agricultural Development Task Force with members reflecting the diversity of O'ahu's farming and ranching industry.

As in our previous testimony on Resolution 24-243, we suggest two amendments to help ensure that the Task Force meets the needs of both the City Council and the agricultural community: 1) that the majority of the Task Force's members should be active farmers and ranchers, and 2) in view of the critical importance of water to all agriculture, that water issues should be specifically included among the priority topics for the Task Force to review.

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

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Mencher

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

P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

December 11, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

TESTIMONY ON RESOLUTION 24-243, CD1

Reconvening the Honolulu City Council's Agricultural Development Task Force, with a membership consisting of not more than nine and not less than five members with no term limits, to foster the growth and enhancement of agricultural activities on Oʻahu.

City Council Chamber
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kiaʻaina, and Members of the Council,

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaiʻi Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized in 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaiʻi's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaiʻi Farm Bureau is in strong support of Resolution 24-243, CD1, which would reconvene the Honolulu City Council's Agricultural Development Task Force.

The original priority focus of the Agricultural Development Task Force (ADTF) is to recommend areas where city policy may support agricultural development, including, but not limited to 1) reviewing the land use ordinance regarding zoning for agricultural areas and the necessary changes in zoning to reflect changes in agricultural practices; 2) addressing gentleman farming from a land use perspective by restricting these uses in agricultural areas; 3) reevaluating requirements for roads and utilities within agriculturally zoned areas; 4) examining the agricultural tax rate; and 5) developing incentives to benefit and enhance the agricultural history.

The ADTF's first meetings in 2005 focused on Agricultural Theft (1/24/05), Agricultural Tax (2/7/05), LUO (3/7/05), and IAL (4/4/05). The last two ADTF meetings (1/12/18 and 1/29/19) focused primarily on IAL.

The ADTF members included stalwarts of agriculture with extensive experience and background in agriculture. They were assets to the Council and the administration through collaboration with the Mayor's Ag Liaison. Some of the past ADTF members include:

Yuki Kitagawa, former HDOA Chair
Jimmy Nakatani, HDOA Chair, ADC Executive Director, HFB President
Dean Okimoto, Nalo Farms, Hawaii Ag Foundation Cahir, and HFB President
Dr. Cal Lum, Former State Veterinarian, DOA Animal Health Division Administrator, and North Shore Cattle Company, and Rancher
Kapu Smith, Senior Land Manager for KS
Wayne Ogasawara, Mililani Ag Park
Alan Takemoto, Bayer and Executive Director at the Hawaii Farm Bureau
Fred Humphrey, Waimanalo Farmer, Ag, nursery supplies

Agriculture has evolved since the ADTF was established, and the new proposed Priority Focus area in the CD1 reflects the current issues of Oʻahu's farmers and ranchers.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor

SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024
10:00 A.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

RESOLUTION 24-243, CD1
RECONVENING THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL'S AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE TO FOSTER THE GROWTH AND ENHANCEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES ON OAHU

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kiaaina and Members of the Council:

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department) strongly supports the adoption of Resolution 24-243, CD1 that reconvenes the Agricultural Development Task Force to foster the growth and enhancement of agricultural activities on Oahu.

The Council Chair will appoint the Task Force members who shall serve for staggered terms of five years, depending on the size of the Task Force. Membership is not to exceed nine and not be less than five, and one member is to have expertise in traditional Native Hawaiian agricultural practices. An annual report from the Task Force is required to be transmitted to the City Council, Mayor, Managing Director, Director of the Office of Economic Revitalization, Director of the Department of Planning and Permitting, and Executive Director of the Office of Change, Sustainability, and Resiliency. Open and ongoing communication between the Task Force and these City legislative and executive functions is encouraged.

The priority function of the Task Force is to recommend means by which City policy can support agricultural development in 7 priority areas.
Food security appears to be the highest priority and could be achieved through:

- Economic incentives and other support for agricultural operators and owners of agricultural lands to keep lands in and available for agricultural production;
- Harmonization of land use policy and tools in protecting agricultural resources and promoting agricultural production; and

- Workforce development, research, and education that could be linked to State initiatives.

The Department believes both food security and economic development can greatly benefit from the expertise the Task Force can bring to bear on the elements described above.

The Department recommends that the Task Force be provided support personnel to undertake research of contemplated strategies, ensure continuity and recordation of the Task Force's efforts, and to arrange meetings and communication with the Council, Mayor, and the executive departments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this critically important tool to protect and promote Oahu's agricultural resources and agricultural operators.