# Resolution 24-243, CD1
# Testimony

**MISC. COM. 553**

COUNCIL

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