BILL030(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 116

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Mar 25, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 5

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ted Kefalas	tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Support	Mar 24, 2026 @ 08:11 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jennine Sullivan	JennineSullivan@gmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Feeding Hawaii Together	Support	Mar 24, 2026 @ 12:54 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Council,

My name is Jennine Sullivan and I serve as the Executive Director of Feeding Hawai'i Together, which operates The Pantry, a food distribution program serving thousands of families across O'ahu each week.

I am writing in strong support of Bill 30.

At The Pantry, we see firsthand the importance of increasing access to fresh, locally grown food for families across our island. In 2025 alone, we distributed over 2.2 million pounds of food, with nearly seventy percent consisting of fresh produce, dairy, eggs, bread, and frozen proteins. Expanding access points for fresh food is critical to meeting the growing needs of our community.

Farmers' markets play an essential role in Hawai'i's food system. They support local farmers, strengthen small businesses, and improve access to fresh, nutritious food in neighborhoods where it may otherwise be limited. Allowing farmers' markets in public parks creates more opportunities for communities to connect directly with local agriculture in accessible, familiar spaces.

This bill provides important clarity and removes unnecessary barriers, making it easier to activate public spaces in a way that benefits both producers and residents. It is a practical step toward strengthening local food systems and improving community wellbeing across O'ahu.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this measure.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sherry Menor	jkiyabu@cochawaii.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Chamber of Commerce Hawaii	Support	Mar 24, 2026 @ 06:30 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Brian Miyamoto	brian@hfbf.org	96759
Representing: Hawaii Farm Bureau	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 25, 2026 @ 12:11 AM
Name: Kathleen Pahinui	Email: pahinuik001@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96791
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 25, 2026 @ 08:23 AM
Testimony: No additional comment at this time.		

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

1050 Bishop St. #508
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-864-1776
info@grassrootinstitute.org

Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

March 25, 2026, 10 a.m.
Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council
Tommy Waters, Chair
Andria Tupola, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: Bill 30 (2026) — RELATING TO PUBLIC PARKS

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and other members of the Council,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** Bill 30 (2026), which would allow farmers markets to operate in city parks with a permit from the Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation.

Farmers markets and most other commercial activities are not currently allowed within city parks. Certain recreational activities, such as camping and sports leagues, can use park facilities with a permit, and this legislation would add farmers markets to the list.

Selling food or homemade wares at a farmers market is a low cost, low risk way for people to turn an idea into a business. This measure would give more Oahu residents the opportunity to start up small businesses and participate in the tourism industry.

Grassroot welcomes this and other legislation that would lower barriers to entrepreneurship.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Testimony to the Honolulu City Council
Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Councilmember Andrea Tupola, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 10:00AM

RE: Bill 030(26) Relating to Public Parks

Aloha e Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Members of the Council:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Bill 30(26) which amends provisions relating to the use of City parks for farmers' markets.

Bill 030(26) aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for 21st Century Agriculture. This pillar prioritizes supporting the economic viability of agriculture careers and reducing operating expenses. This ordinance directly supports small, local farmers and value-added producers by clarifying that farmers' markets are recognized permissible uses of public parks under the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu. By removing ambiguity in park permitting and incorporating farmers' markets into the definition of allowable activities, the City will increase market access for producers, allowing them to reach local consumers directly and lower operating costs derived from transportation.

As cost pressures continue to mount in Hawaii, Honolulu's food and economic security have never been more important. This ordinance advances both economic resilience and community health. Increasing market access improves the viability of operating an agricultural business. This encourages farmers to become more productive, further reducing the City's reliance on imported goods and creating more jobs. Secondly, by increasing the community's access to these fresh local goods, the Council can encourage healthier diets and improve utilization of other park equipment. Parks play an important role in Honolulu's community by advancing public health, and thus, the health of the local workforce---the most basic component of the economy. This ordinance is well-aligned with the character of parks as community health infrastructure. Allowing farmers markets to be permitted within parks only contributes to this strengthening and diversification of this intent.

For these reasons we respectfully ask to pass Bill 030(26). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030

Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

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

March 25, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

TESTIMONY ON BILL 30 (2026)
RELATING TO PUBLIC PARKS

City Council Chamber
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, 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 Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB) supports Bill 30, which clarifies that farmers' markets are a permitted use in City parks under the oversight of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

HFB appreciates the intent of this measure to remove ambiguity in current law and create a clearer pathway for farmers' markets to operate in public spaces. Expanding opportunities for farmers' markets can improve access to fresh, locally grown food, support small farmers and value-added producers, and strengthen neighborhood economies across O'ahu.

Farmers' markets play a critical role in Hawai'i's local food system. They provide farmers with direct-to-consumer sales opportunities, allowing them to retain a greater share of food dollars while building relationships with their communities. Increasing access to appropriate venues, such as public parks, can help expand these benefits, particularly in underserved areas.

While we support the intent of this bill, HFB emphasizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of what constitutes a "farmers' market." The success of farmers' markets depends on consumer trust that the products being sold are locally grown or produced.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the implementation of this measure ensure that markets operating under this authorization prioritize:

- Hawai‘i-grown agricultural products;
- Direct participation by farmers and local producers; and
- Transparency in product sourcing and labeling.

Clear standards or guidelines that distinguish farmers’ markets from craft fairs and swap meet-type activities will help preserve the value of these markets for both producers and consumers.

With these considerations in mind, HFB supports Bill 30 as a step toward expanding market opportunities for local agriculture while ensuring that the term “farmers’ market” continues to reflect its intended purpose.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.