

SB 2803

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
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**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE

February 3, 2016
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

**SENATE BILL NO. 2803
RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURAL LOAN REVOLVING FUND**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 2803. The Department strongly supports this bill. This bill seeks to expand the Department's Agricultural Loan Program by providing additional funds. Hawaii's agriculture industry is facing severe challenges as evidenced by the shutdown of sugar production on Maui and two well-known, long time farming operations announcing their intent to shut down operations. Challenges include high input and transportation costs, limited agricultural labor and food safety issues. It is anticipated that funding will be necessary to assist existing farms to meet these challenges.

While these factors are challenging, as good quality larger scale farm lands such as the Galbraith lands on Oahu and eventually the sugar lands on Maui become available, farmers will be able to take advantage of prime agricultural lands to mechanize production, utilize new technologies and achieve greater economies of scale. Access to affordable capital will be vital in helping these new operations to develop.

The department believes the agricultural loan program is the best avenue to provide access to affordable capital for our agricultural community. The agricultural loan program has been successful over the years and will continue to preserve and expand agriculture production throughout the islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2803
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LOAN REVOLVING FUND

Room 224
2:45 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB supports SB 2803 which appropriates \$4,000,000 for the agricultural loan program to increase the State's food sustainability.

Food security, food self-sufficiency and growing agriculture are popular concepts seen in many of the measures before the legislature this year. This Legislative Session, there have been many bills introduced that support of Hawaii's Agricultural Industry. This year, HFB has introduced a package of measures addressing the real needs of our farmers and ranchers all associated with increasing farm and ranch viability. These include infrastructure needs, agricultural education, Food Safety, invasive species control, and regulatory assistance.

This measure supports the growth of Hawaii's agricultural industry by providing additional funding to HDOA to assist Hawaii in growing its agriculture sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.