

**TESTIMONY**  
**GM 271 & GM 272**

Re: Nomination to the Board of Agriculture G.M. Nos. 271 and 272

Dear Chair Hee, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs:

The following answers to the questionnaire are provided below:

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Board of Agriculture?

I am very interested in food security for Hawaii and I hope to be able to make a contribution toward that goal.

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Board of Agriculture?

I see the role of a member of the Board of Agriculture as making responsible decisions on agriculture matters taking a broad societal view of things. I specifically see the role as an opportunity to help make Hawaii more food secure.

I am an advocate for all kinds of farmers large and small, organic and conventional, on all islands, all elevations, wet side and dry. Although, we may be considered large farmers, I think it is very dangerous for food security to depend on a few very large farmers.

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Board of Agriculture, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Board of Agriculture.

After getting a degree in accounting at the UH, we started growing bananas nearly 30 years ago. We had no money so we traded chicken manure for banana pulapula. Eventually, we became the largest banana grower in the state and bought 600 acres of fee simple land. The things that failed along the way could fill a museum. This experience was very valuable. I have a very high respect for wise old small farmers. And, like them, I try not to talk too much.

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

I hope to bring awareness that Food security involves farmers farming. And, if farmers make money the farmers will farm. This is not complicated.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Board of Agriculture?

I see myself as a bridge between the "shiny shoe" folks and the "rubbah slippah" folks. I have the ability to see a desired goal in the future and can stay focused on that goal. There are a thousand reasons why no can. I try to look for the one reason why CAN!! Keep it simple, keep it focused and no give up.

- (6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the Board of Agriculture?

I helped with the Thirty Meter Telescope decision to site the telescope on Mauna Kea. I was able to talk to folks on all sides of the issue. I learned from Patrick Kahawaiola'a that the process was most important. I thought that, that being the case, then everyone contributing to the process made for a better final product.. That means we need to aloha everyone who contributed input, whether or not we agree with the position.

Two or three years ago, I told Kumu Lehua Veincent—Principal of Keaukaha Elementary School that the Thirty Meter Telescopes wanted to come to the Big Island. I suggested that as a start we ask them for a good faith offer. I told Kumu, "how about we ask them for five full ride scholarships for Keaukaha kids, to the best schools in the nation?" Kumu looked up at me and simply said; "and what about the rest?" I could feel my ears getting hot. I felt pretty stupid. Indeed, what about the rest.

These two lessons, "the process" and "what about the rest?" are principles I hold very close to me. And, I think that this approach will benefit the Board of Agriculture.

- (7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Board of Agriculture? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

I do not see conflicts of interest at this point. However, I will quickly recuse myself if I do.

Mahalo,

Richard Ha

LINDA LINGLE  
Governor



State of Hawaii  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO  
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2010  
3:15 P.M.  
ROOM 229

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NOS. 271 AND 272  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF  
AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, RICHARD HA,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2010 AND 6-30-2014

Chairperson Hee and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message Nos. 271 and 272 in strong support of the confirmation of Richard Ha for the Board of Agriculture.

I've known Mr. Ha since the mid-1990's from working together on many agricultural issues. He is an entrepreneurial farmer, always adapting to the ever-changing business conditions and challenges facing businesses. He investigates and employs new technologies, researches trends and positions himself accordingly. He is innovative and has completely remade his business model more than once. I admire his pioneering spirit and value his simple wisdom.

In addition to his agricultural experience and knowledge, he has a long history of service to the industry and the community. He takes active interest in the economic well-being of the community and its people and welcomes all to participate in difficult and sometimes complex discussions. He's inclusive and keeps a balanced perspective.

All of these qualities make him a valued member of the Board of Agriculture and I ask for your support of his nomination.

Testimony before the  
**Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs**

Friday, February 19, 2010  
3:15 p.m., Conference Rm. 229

**Statement on Governor's Messages Nos. 271 & 272**

by Robert A. Alm  
Executive Vice President  
Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.

TO THE HONORABLE CLAYTON HEE, CHAIR, JILL N. TOKUDA, VICE CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Richard Ha to be a member of the Board of Agriculture. Richard is one of those rare individuals who is very successful at what he does as a farmer and is also constantly looking at the horizon to figure out where the world is headed next and how best to respond to it.

He is a successful farmer from a business standpoint, from a quality of product standpoint (his produce is featured at, among other places, Alan Wong's) and from the standpoint of passing on the success to his employees and to members of the community. He focuses a lot on our young people, giving them a sense of what each of us can do and how to live in concert with the environment around us. He has been one of the leaders in the world in the area of growing crops in a manner which is fully compatible with the environment.

He has also made it his business to look ahead. His work to understand the issues which Hawaii faces in its reliance on oil, his work on renewable energy, and his support of education all testify to a man who believes in our responsibility to leave a better world to our children.

Statement on Governor's Message No. 271  
February 19, 2010  
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The phrase "gentleman farmer" is used a lot these days. In Richard's case, while he is certainly a gentleman in every way, the words "resourceful and relentless farmer" seem far more appropriate. I believe he would bring great wisdom and great common sense to the deliberations of the Board of Agriculture. I most strongly urge your confirmation of him for this position.

Thank you.



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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON WATER, LAND AGRICULTURE and HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**CONFIRMATION OF RICHARD HA  
FOR  
THE HAWAII BOARD OF AGRICULTURE  
GM271 and GM272**

**FEBRUARY 2010**

Dear Chairman Hee and Members of the Committee:

**STRONG SUPPORT.**

My name is Loren Mochida, General Manager for Tropical Hawaiian Products (THP) in Keaau, Hawaii. THP is a processor and exporter of Hawaiian Premium papayas to CONUS and Japan.

I am in strong support of the confirmation of Mr. Richard Ha for the Board of Agriculture. Along with his strong leadership skills, his organizational development has been exceptionally outstanding.

I have worked closely with Mr. Ha and his family for several years and they have proven to be one of the foremost innovators with their farming operations. He has given copious support to the agriculture industry, and his performance to relate and work with various groups is outstanding.

Mr. Ha's diversified experience in the agriculture industry all his life has rounded his career from production to sales and to marketing technologies. Mr. Ha's outstanding efforts and support in the agriculture industry is highly recognized. It is with confidence that Mr. Ha will be a dedicated agriculture person on the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide support for the confirmation of Mr. Richard Ha as a member of the Board of Agriculture.



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FEBRUARY 19, 2010  
HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE  
AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON GM 271 AND GM 272  
RICHARD HA

Chair Hee, Vice Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:

My name is Dean Okimoto, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF), which is the largest non-profit general agriculture organization representing approximately 1,600 farm and ranch family members statewide.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation strongly supports the nomination of Mr. Richard Ha to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Ha has an extensive background and understanding of Hawaii's diverse agricultural industry and would be an asset to the State of Hawaii if appointed to Hawaii Board of Agriculture. He has been an active member of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation since 1992 and his years of experience and understanding of worldwide agricultural practices would be invaluable to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture and its' mission to provide leadership and advocacy for Hawaii's agriculture industry. Mr. Ha is respected for his impressive credentials as an agriculture leader, having served on numerous agriculture boards and councils and through his involvement as a member of many agriculture organizations.

As the president of Hamakua Springs Country Farms, Mr. Ha's first hand experience and familiarity with local farming practices will help him provide valuable input to the efforts of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. Mr. Ha's knowledge and experience would be an asset to the State of Hawaii if appointed.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation is pleased to support the nomination of Richard Ha to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. We hope that you will give Mr. Ha's nomination to this position serious consideration.





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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY (IN STRONG SUPPORT)**

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
THE HONORABLE CLAYTON HEE, CHAIR  
THE HONORABLE JILL N. TOKUDA, VICE CHAIR

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 271:**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Agriculture,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, **RICHARD HA**, for a term to expire 6-30-2010

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 272**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Agriculture,  
Gubernatorial Nominee, **RICHARD HA**, for a term to expire 6-30-2014

**Testimony of Glenn Hong, President, Young Brothers, Limited**  
February 19, 2010

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Messages 271 and 272 concerning the Governor's nomination of **RICHARD HA** to the Board of Agriculture. **On behalf of Young Brothers, Limited, I submit this testimony in strong support of Mr. Ha's nomination.**

Mr. Ha is the owner and President of Mauna Kea Banana Company, Inc., which does business as Hamakua Springs Country Farms (Hamakua Springs). He is a farmer and has been in the business of farming for 30 years. At Hamakua Springs, three generations of his family are researching, developing, growing and selling not only bananas, but also the best-tasting varieties of tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers and watercress they can find. This family business ships primarily from Hilo to Oahu and Maui.

Mr. Ha is a forward thinker and has long been on the leading edge of the agricultural industry. Equally important, he has always been very generous with his knowledge and experience, including with our company. He thinks about, analyzes and plans for where the world will be five, ten and more years out. He recognizes that we in Hawaii are vulnerable because we import more than 85 percent of our food and seeks to put our community in a position to sustainably utilize the resources of our islands, including land, soil and water resources, to produce food and to manage logistics and costs to transport food to Oahu and other islands.

For example, Mr. Ha's family business has found ways to sustainably utilize the 130 inches of rainfall per year on the Big Island's Hamakua coast, such as using his farm's readily-available resources to keep expanding into ever more diversified agriculture and using a renewable resource (hydroelectric power) to generate the power necessary for cooling and consolidation activities as part of a larger plan to help feed our State and, in particular, Oahu. His family business has developed a cooperative process for farmers to cool agricultural products grown in the Hamakua area in refrigerated warehouses at Hamakua Springs and consolidate such products in refrigerated containers for transportation to the harbor. Not only is this method of transportation more efficient, it better maintains food quality for shipping to Oahu and other islands.

**Young Brothers, Limited's Testimony**  
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This is one example of how Mr. Ha practices and lives by the philosophy of "sustainability" in terms of his family and workers, the environment, and our community. Mr. Ha is continually looking to expand his knowledge and improve his practices as well. He was the only person from Hawaii to attend the Peak Oil conference in Houston in 2007 and attended one in Denver in October 2009.

In short, Mr. Ha's strong professional background and leadership in his field and his community, as well as his technical skills and training, make him an excellent choice for the Board. We respectfully request that you recommend approval of his nomination to the Board.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Governor's Messages 271 and 272.

**TESTIMONY**  
**GM 271 & GM 272**  
**(END)**