

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **117**

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2011

RE: GOV. MSG. NO. 504

Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui
President of the Senate
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2011
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred Governor's Message No. 504, submitting for study and consideration the nomination of:

CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

G.M. No. 504 RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN,
for a term to expire December 31,
2014,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee has reviewed the personal history, resume, and statement submitted by the nominee and finds Russell S. Kokubun to possess the requisite qualifications to be nominated as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination of Russell S. Kokubun from Colleen Hanabusa, United States Representative, Hawai'i, First District; the Agribusiness Development Corporation; the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Robert K. Lindsey, Jr., Trustee, Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Sylvia Yuen, Interim Dean and Director, University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources; the University of Hawaii College of Social Sciences Public Policy Center; the Maui County Farm Bureau; the Hawaii Pest Control Association; Hawaii Oceanic Technology, Inc.; Monsanto Research and Operations - Hawaii; the Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association; the Kauai Cattlemen's Association; the Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association; W.H. Shipman, Limited; the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative; The Nature Conservancy; Hawaii Fish Company, Inc.; the Hawaii

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Agriculture Research Center; Nalo Farms, Inc.; Kaupo Ranch Ltd.; Maui Cattle Company; McCandless Ranch; the Aha Kiole Advisory Committee; Meadow Gold Dairies; Joy Gold Unlimited; the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association; Aquaculture Planning & Advocacy LLC; Maui Cattlemen's Association; The Gas Company; Kahuku Farmers, Inc.; Matsuda Fukuyama Farms; the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; the Ka'u Farm Bureau; Armstrong Produce; Mikilua Poultry Farm, Inc.; the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation; Alexander & Baldwin, Inc.; the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.; the Big Island Farm Bureau; Alumside Products, Inc.; Castle & Cooke Hawai'i; the Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders' Association, Inc.; ILWU Local 142; the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association; the Kauai County Farm Bureau; the East Oahu County Farm Bureau; Brainstorm Marketing, Inc.; The Trust for Public Lands Hawai'i; the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 50; G.A. Morris, Inc.; Syngenta Hawaii, LLC; Poamoho Organic Produce; and thirty individuals.

Mr. Kokubun grew up in Kaimuki and gained an early appreciation for agriculture by working in his family's extensive garden. Soon after graduating from college, Mr. Kokubun began working as a farm laborer on the Island of Hawaii. In 1978, he purchased a vegetable farm, which he still owns today.

Mr. Kokubun most recently served as the Senator for the 2nd Senatorial District representing the areas of Ka'u, Puna, and Hilo on the Island of Hawaii. While a Senator, Mr. Kokubun served as a member of the Senate Committees on Energy and Environment; Higher Education; Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs; and Ways and Means. Mr. Kokubun also served as the Chair of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force, which was responsible, in part, for defining state goals, objectives, policies, and priority guidelines to aid in the long-term development of the State.

While Mr. Kokubun has served the public in elective office over the years, he has demonstrated a keen awareness of the many complex issues and challenges facing the agriculture industry and farmers in Hawaii. Specifically, Mr. Kokubun played a key role as an elected official in addressing issues related to water use, zoning of land, and food security which were critical to resolving many concerns for farmers and the agricultural industry in Hawaii. Your Committee has no reservations that Mr. Kokubun will use the broad experience and administrative skills he has gained



throughout his years of public service to successfully guide the Department of Agriculture through Hawaii's most pressing issues on agriculture and farming.

Your Committee finds that as a farmer, Mr. Kokubun is aware of the current needs and challenges facing the agricultural community in Hawaii. Based on his experience as the Chair of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs as well as Chair of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force, Mr. Kokubun is well prepared for the responsibilities of heading the Department of Agriculture. All of Mr. Kokubun's experiences have contributed to his expansive view of agriculture and the issues that surround it.

Mr. Kokubun's overall vision for the Department of Agriculture includes reestablishing the importance of agriculture in the State. In addressing your Committee, Mr. Kokubun shared his plans to focus on food and energy sustainability and security; the identification and designation of important agricultural lands; and the restoration, maintenance, and improvement of agricultural infrastructure in the State. Mr. Kokubun also reported to your Committee that one of his initial goals as Chairperson will be to boost the morale of his dedicated staff, which has been hit hard by state budget cuts.

Your Committee finds that Mr. Kokubun has been a tireless advocate for agriculture and sustainability. Mr. Kokubun is a natural and respected leader whose collaborative skills and innovative ideas will be a positive force within the Department of Agriculture.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominee, has found the nominee to be qualified for the position to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nomination.



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Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture,

Clarence K. Nishihara

CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, Chair



Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture
AGL
Advise and Consent

Governor's Message No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
504	AGL	Feb 10-11		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its decision				
The Recommendation is:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advise and Consent 2340		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Advise and Consent 2345		
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
NISHIHARA, Clarence K. (C)	✓			
KAHELE, Gilbert (VC)	✓			
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne				✓
DELA CRUZ, Donovan M.				✓
KOUCHI, Ronald D.	✓			
SHIMABUKURO, Maile	✓			
TOKUDA, Jill N.	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn	✓			
SLOM, Sam	✓			
TOTAL	7			2
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <i>Gilbert Kalich</i>				
Distribution: Original File with Committee Report Yellow Clerk's Office Pink Drafting Agency Goldenrod Committee File Copy				

*Only one Governor's Message per Record of Votes