

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII



WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

TYLER I. GOMES  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM J. AILA, JR, CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
DECISION MAKING ON FEBRUARY 24, 2021 AT 9:45AM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SB 1343, SD1, RELATING TO THE HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION ACT**

February 24, 2021

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) submits comments on this bill that removes acreage restrictions on leases of Hawaiian home lands for agricultural purposes; provides that the availability of the foregoing leases shall be subject to the availability of suitable tracts of land; and specifies that the foregoing leases may be for for-profit or non-profit purposes.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) as originally enacted by Congress authorized the Hawaiian Homes Commission to lease not less than twenty nor more than eighty acres of agricultural lands. The HHCA currently authorizes DHHL to lease no more than forty acres of agricultural lands. Removing acreage restrictions on leases of Hawaiian home lands for agricultural purposes should keep in mind that over 19,000 applicants are on the waitlist for an agriculture lease as of December 31, 2020 – 3,817 on Oahu; 4,666 on Maui; 7,269 on Hawaii Island; 2,235 on Kauai; and 1,097 on Molokai.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



Testimony in support of SB 1343 SD1

Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Lessees; Agriculture, Farming; Acreage

Removes acreage restrictions on leases of Hawaiian home lands for agricultural purposes.

[COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS](#)

Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Honorable Senators Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, and Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair and committee members;

My name is Juanita Mahienaena Brown Kawamoto, Lunahoomalu for the Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. On behalf of the HAC I am submitting testimony in support of SB 1343 SD1.

Sustainable Agricultural farming across the State of Hawaii is greatly needed to help our State and community recover from economic disparities during 2020 and 2021, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sustainable agriculture has been a strong proponent of economic development for many years in the State of Hawaii. Cares Act funding from the Federal, State and County, including the private sector of agribusiness, is one the most fiscally sound, expedient and healthy ways for our community to resolve the need for real self-sustainability, now and in the years to come. The pandemic has revealed to Hawaii what happens when the ships stop coming to Hawaii? The reality of how do we feed a local community of 1.4 million people when interstate commerce is no longer an economically viable choice?

DHHL Agricultural lands can clearly be a part of Hawaii's answer to self-sustainability, in one of the most isolated cities in the world. Good farm planning and processes from local farm communities are another good start in overcoming past discrepancies and poor workforce for farming. Local, community driven agricultural cooperatives that implement a healthy and industrious process using Community Sustainable Agriculture by delivering farm fresh food straight to the people of Hawaii. Transportation between the islands, whether it's supported by large shipping companies utilizing air cargo, barges or commercial and private boats who move the produce throughout Hawaii nei are also a necessity when getting food to the masses.

Native Hawaiians are leaders, if given the opportunity and means.

Historically, one million Native Hawaiians were able to feed themselves and thrive, before western civilization brought the industrial complex and disease to Hawaii.

We can reset history and take care of our own kuleana.

Please pass SB 1343 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Juanita Mahienaena Brown Kawamoto

Lunahoomalu

Hawaiian Affairs Caucus

Democratic Party of Hawaii