



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Water and Land

And

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Monday, January 30, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

By

Anna Wieczorek, Interim Dean

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 84 – RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Chairs Inouye and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Elefante and Richards, and members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land and Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 84 which establishes the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. The purpose of this working group is to develop a plan for a more sustainable, resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of our community.

A sustainable food system is defined as one that provides sufficient food to meet current food needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that support continuous food production for generations to come. To ensure equitable access to nutritional food that is produced with minimal impact on the environment, Hawai'i needs to encourage the development of sustainable food systems. Our food systems need to serve our population's health, the environmental health of our land, and the economic health of our food and agricultural sector. Hawai'i needs to be proactive in making locally produced food widely available to our population. Similar to other parts of the world, Hawai'i is especially vulnerable to natural and human disasters that may have a negative impact on our own food security. Hence, the establishment of a working group focused on making our local food production more sustainable is one we certainly support.

Establishment of the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group as named in SB 84 is the first step in bringing together a wide spectrum of society to address our food needs in a holistic fashion.

We support this bill provided that its passage is in addition to and does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.