



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 Higher Education
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By

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And

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SB 663 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 663 relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources which appropriates funds to establish eight full-time equivalent (8.0 FTE) agricultural technician positions and four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) community coordinator positions.

We respectfully offer the following amendments: The title of the bill; SECTION 1., lines 2-3; and SECTION 2., line 11, and page 2, line 1, to correct the name of the college to university of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical agriculture and human [resources] resilience (CTAHR). The renaming of the college was approved in October 2024 to better align CTAHR's name to its land-grant mission of improving the human condition and human use of natural resources through research, education and Cooperative Extension.

CTAHR's agricultural research and extension stations (CARES) provide crucial support for local farmers, ranchers, and communities, and its research and extension operations are hampered by a lack of permanent agricultural technician positions. These technicians are essential for conducting plant and animal experiments and demonstrations, as well as the upkeep of station facilities and equipment. Community coordinator positions facilitate the development of CARES as hubs of collaborative innovation and community prosperity through Talk Stories. Increasing technical and support staff for Extension agents increases the devotion of more time to educating and mentoring farmers and the communities of the CARES centers statewide.

We support SB 663 with the suggested amendments, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.