

YOUR GOVERNMENT
YOUR AFFAIRS
YOUR FARM BUREAU
A SERVICE OF HAWAII FARM BUREAU FEDERATION



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March 2010

Aloha Friends,

The 2011 legislative session has passed an important milestone where surviving legislation has crossed from the House of Representatives to the Senate and vice versa.

Your Government Affairs committee of volunteers and professionals has worked tirelessly to listen to your comments, identify and focus your priorities, initiate legislation, lobbied for its introduction, support and ultimate passage and, in some cases, defeat. We engage experienced specialists in water, land use, permitting, food safety, landowner rights, dam and reservoir safety, environmental issues, tax issues; virtually any topic that affects agriculture. This process was initiated prior to the convention in October 2010.

We began the legislative session by tracking more than 570 bills; all requiring review and a strategy. At crossover, the list is down to 113 separate pieces of legislation. We classify legislation into three general categories: support, oppose, and 'watch' and there are varying degrees within these general categories.

While lobbying for legislation we support, we also oppose legislation that might be damaging to our members and the agricultural sector. Supporting and opposing legislation involves testifying, both in writing and in person, partnering with other organizations, stakeholders and lawmakers.

It's no secret that legislation that has funding attached has a tough row to hoe. Cognizant of the economic climate, we were mindful to approach the 2011 session with an emphasis on initiatives that will not require funding. As of this writing, more than 68% of legislation identified as HFBF priorities are still alive in some form.

As a grass-roots organization; the largest and most influential of its kind in the state, we are only as strong as our members. Remember that HFBF is an affiliate of American Farm Bureau, with member ranks exceeding 6 million families.

HFBF hosts weekly conference calls to discuss the actions of the committee, to define and refine positions, strategy and testimonies.

I encourage you to get involved, join our calls, join our mailings lists, encourage your friends and neighbors to join Farm Bureau and help make agriculture in Hawaii as strong as it can be.

Warm regards and sincere thanks for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Manfredi".

Chris Manfredi
Vice President
Chairperson, Government Affairs

Among the bills on which HFBF is actively taking supporting positions:

[Agricultural theft](#)

HB1524 HD2 Requires those sentenced for agricultural theft to provide restitution to the victim. Includes a requirement to maintain certificates while in possession of agricultural commodities to help thwart theft.

[Aquaculture](#)

HB568 HD2 & SB1511 SD1 These HFBF bills would increase lease terms for aquaculture operations and make other revisions that would strengthen the aquaculture industry.

[Barrel tax](#)

SB722 SD2 Changes the tax on a barrel of petroleum to an unspecified amount and deposits these amounts, once finalized, into various special and revolving funds. HFBF is seeking an amendment to this legislation that would seek to allocate funding for improvements to dams, reservoirs, irrigation systems, and transportation networks.

HB1019 HD1 Would adjust the barrel tax allocation from fifteen cents to 45 cents on each barrel of imported oil to be deposited in to the agricultural development and food security special fund.

[Dam and Reservoir Safety](#)

SB14 SD2 Would help fund improvements and investigative studies of dams and reservoirs.

SB142 SD1 This HFBF initiative would require BLNR to consider the roles of dams and reservoirs as important water resources for the State and the need to maintain and operate them in a safe and feasible manner.

HB744 HD1 Establishes a dam safety task force made of public and private stakeholders to make recommendations to the legislature. HFBF has already assumed a leading role in helping to mitigate the impacts of Dam and Reservoir Safety rules in a collaborative forum with DLNR and stakeholders.

[Funding and Financing](#)

SB1153 SD1 Enhances the new farmer program loan interest rate; increases the loan limits; reduces the number of credit denials required to qualify for the program and appropriates funds.

HB1570 HD2 This HFBF bill would appropriate funds to reimburse qualified beef cattle, dairy, hog, poultry, and goat farms up to 60% of their feed expenses.

[Food Safety and Invasive Species](#)

HB865 HD2 Seeks to increase the fee assessed for the inspection, quarantine, and eradication of invasive species from 50 cents to 75 cents for every 1,000 pounds of freight imported into the State. HFBF is offering guarded support for this measure conditioned on the premise that if the amount is increased, additional funds be allocated to the restoration of inspector positions or used for irrigation infrastructure.

HB290 HD1 Establishes and appropriates funds for DOA's Agriculture Inspection and Certification Special Fund. This bill would allow DOA to enter into agreements with government and private agencies to hire inspectors to perform certification and audit services, maintain food safety, and to establish an Internet food safety promotional and reporting system.

[Important Agricultural Lands](#)

SB1443 SD2 Requires HDOA and DLNR to identify and map certain public lands to be considered for transfer from the latter to the former. Requires HDOA to then to identify which of those lands should be considered for designation as IAL.

[Infrastructure](#)

SB249 SD2 Would provide funds for a slaughterhouse within the Campbell Industrial Park on Oahu.

[Irrigation:](#)

SB145 SD2 This HFBF bill would issue general obligation bonds to help fund capital improvements to various irrigation systems across the state.

SB1209 SD1 This HFBF bill would appropriate funds for the continued operation and maintenance of the east Kauai irrigation system.

[Permitting](#)

HB1230 HD2 Was initiated by HFBF. It would exempt construction of low-risk nonresidential and aquacultural structures from county building permit requirements, under certain conditions.

[Public Utilities Commission](#)

SB98 SD2 Moves to define guidelines for the PUC when considering applications by water carriers; in response to the recent decision by the PUC to give PASHA Hawaii an unfair competitive advantage. Since PASHA is not required to serve less profitable routes, it is feared that Young bros would increase rates to farmers and ranchers. Moreover, public notice and subsequent hearings targeting the island(s) that are affected by the PUC's decisions would be enhanced. Legislation that would make for an expanded PUC with a commissioner representing each county, enhancing neighbor island representation has been deferred (SB99).

HB1277 HD2 Would fund a Statewide Agriculture Water Use and Development Plan.

[Trespass](#)

SB1079 SD2 & SB1041 SD1 Move that an owner of range land owes no duty of care toward trespassers under specified conditions. The latter authorizes fines of up to \$10,000 for the offense of criminal trespass on agricultural lands. It is expected that these bills will be merged into a single piece of legislation.

HB227 HD2 Makes entering or remaining unlawfully on unimproved or unused agricultural lands without permission an offense of criminal trespass in the second degree if the lands are fenced, enclosed, or secured, or a sign is displayed.

HB548 HD3 Holds authors and publishers of visitor websites and publications liable to readers who suffer injury or death as a result of being enticed to go onto private or public lands from which the public is excluded.

[And](#)

SB1451 SD1 Seeks to designate October as "Farm to School Month"

HB1380 HD3 Would establish Farm-to-School and Hawaii-grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Programs to increase the procurement of locally-grown fruits and vegetables.