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Subject: Hawaii's landscape industry response to farm bill hearings
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"I represent both the Hawaii Island Landscape Association and the statewide Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii. We speak for an industry that produces and exports foliage plants, provides expertise in planning and construction of tropical resort grounds, builds and maintains extensive turf areas for golf courses, multi-family housing, and commercial and industrial sites. Combined gross revenues in our industry, in Hawaii, are in excess of \$500 million per year, an amount about equal to all diversified ag crops combined. Hawaii's largest industry, tourism, relies to a great degree on the value added to Hawaii's resources by the landscape industry.

Who are we? Landscape architects, nurserymen, contractors, arborists and tree trimming operations, golf courses, resort and multi-family housing grounds, commercial and resort grounds care specialists, interior plant specialists, and our College of Tropical Agriculture research and extension support.

On the export side, our landscape architects are sought throughout the Pacific Basin and other tropical areas for their expertise in resort and urban development planning. Our nurserymen supply a worldwide market for foliage plants. And our service industries create the local built environment of delight and amenity enjoyed by 10 million tourists a year, importing dollars to Hawaii's economy.

Our greatest challenges are workforce and design development, crop protection in nursery settings, and lack of research in ornamental horticulture and design professions. We face 15 to 20 new pest imports each and every year, threatening the beauty of our landscaped grounds, yet with limited resources for research. Wind, excessive rain, flooding, salt spray, pesticide contamination, and hurricane events threaten our foliage crops that often lack any crop insurance at all. Huge demands for landscape design challenge our providers, yet the University of Hawaii has not yet begun to offer a school of landscape architecture. Coconut trees are threatened by an epidemic of fungus, yet the only long term study on the problem was interrupted by the last hurricane on Kauai and never resumed due to lack of funds. Workforce limitations, in number, due to high employment demands in all industries, and in quality, due to the lack of training

in
the public schools and colleges for landscape specialists, has meant
we've
had to develop mostly volunteer-staffed training & certification
programs
for our workforce.

The federal government can assist Hawaii's landscape industry by:

1. Increased support for extension, university research, and the
soon
to be created school of landscape architecture;
2. Adapting gross income limits so crop supports and insurance for
foliage crops can become available for our landscape and export
nurseries.
3. Creative approaches recognized and promoting the high value
added
services exported by Hawaii in landscape design and city, regional and
resort planning/architecture services.
4. Include Hawaii's foliage plant crops in the Specialty Crops
Competitiveness Act.
5. Review the applicability of relaxed gross income limitations
for
conservation project assistance, recognizing the very high land values
in
Hawaii and the consequent necessity for viable operations to have high
enough incomes to support land rents and be economically viable.
6. Creative workforce development assistance to meet training
needs on
a continuing adult education basis as well as for programs in our
schools
and community & land grant colleges for youth skill development.

We thank you for hearing about Hawaii's misunderstood economic giant,
the
landscape industry, and for your attention to our needs in the next farm
bill."