



Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 209
Kailua Kona, HI 96745
www.moklc.org

May 8, 2024

RE: Letters of Support for Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement

The organizations and individuals below provided letters of support for the Nani Kai Hoku agricultural easement and are on the following pages.

1. Senator Tim Richards
2. Hawaii Farmers Union United
3. Kohala Food HUB
4. Hawaii Farm Bureau
5. Hawaii County Council Member Cynthia Evans
6. Hawaii Institute for Permaculture
7. Janet Britt, 47+ years experience with land trusts and conservation and agricultural easements
8. Kohala Lihikai, local nonprofit focused on preserving land and nearshore environments
9. Christine Richardson, community leader, North Kohala

Additionally, the individuals and organizations outlined below have indicated that they will testify on Friday, depending on when testimony will be called,

- Anny Bruch, Vice President of Hawaii Farmers Union United, Kauai, vicepresident@hfuf.org
- Hunter Heaivilin, agricultural consultant, Oahu hunter@supersistence.or
- Vincent Kimura, consultant, Oahu, vincent.kimura@gmail.com
- Maureen Datta, farmer and owner of Adaptations, a community supported agriculture project and Food Hub, Hawaii Island, mokdatta@gmail.com
- Robert Bence, Maui farmer, Maui, robert@hawaiisustainable.com
- Leslie Nugent, Kohala community organizer working in food systems, Hawaii Island, Lrae.nugent@gmail.com
- Christine Zuckerman, farmer, Oahu, czuckerman89@gmail.com
- Gail Byrne Baber, Nani Kai Hoku Farm
- Janet Britt, co-founder Moku o Keawe Land Conservancy, 45+ years experience with conservation and agricultural easements, including conducting baseline monitoring, annual monitoring and reporting, Hawaii Island, janetbritt50@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Alexandra Kelepolo
Vice President

Letters of Support – Nani Kai Hoku Agricultural Easement



The Senate
Ka 'Aha Kenekoa

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

May 8, 2024

RE: Letter of Support for Funding Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement

To Whom It May Concern:

I am in strong support for the allocation of funding towards the agricultural easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm. These easements are vital in sustaining our agricultural heritage, securing food autonomy, and preserving the sanctity of our agricultural lands. Agricultural easements are an important tool to help keep farmers on their farms and encourage farms to be kept in the family for the next generation.

Clarence Baber has been farming in Hawaii for 40+ years and has been instrumental in furthering regenerative and organic farming: co-founding the Hawaii Culinary Herb Association in the 1980s, the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association in the 1990s, and the Kohala Chapter of the Farmers Union in 2012. In 1992, the University of Hawaii studied his agricultural methods to better understand how they contributed to high yields per square foot and lower than normal pest challenges. This research has proven invaluable in advancing sustainable farming practices across the region.

Both Clarence and Gail Baber have been instrumental in furthering Hawaii's hemp industry -- providing options to move the islands towards greater sustainability with a crop that can be used in building materials as well as a food and fuel source. Between 2013 and 2016, Clarence coordinated stakeholders from around the state to help pass hemp legislation and was invited to assist with planting a research crop at the University of Hawaii. Gail serves as President of the Hawaii Hemp Farmers Association, a board member of the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation, and has volunteered over 8,000 hours to protect coastal open space on the North Kohala coast, home to the most numerous intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

An agricultural easement will allow the Babers to continue farming and pass on decades of important farming knowledge to the next generation. I urge the committee to grant the necessary support for Nani Kai Hoku Farm's agricultural easement.

Sincerely,

Sen. Herbert M "Tim" Richards III, DVM
Hawaii State Senator, District 4
Office: 808.586.6760



Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Maureen Datta
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Odysseus Vacalis
East Hawai'i

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Natalie Urminska
Kauai

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawai'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawai'i

Negus Manna
Lana'i

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai, Maui

Rufina Ka'auwai
Moloka'i

India Clark
North Shore, Oahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, Oahu

Dr. Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, Oahu

Scott Crawford
HFUF Director

Gail Byrne
HFUF Director

P.O. Box 99
Wailuku, HI 96793-0099
May 8, 2024

RE: Support for Agricultural Easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm

The Hawaii Farmers Union strongly supports the efforts of Clarence and Gail Baber, of the Nani Kai Hoku Farm, to place an agricultural easement on the farm to ensure the farm area remains in agriculture in perpetuity. Agricultural easements help protect the long-term viability of the nation's food supply and this intent is aligned with HFUU's mission to advocate for the sovereign right of farmers, ranchers, and fishers to create and sustain vibrant and prosperous agricultural communities for the benefit of all Hawaii through cooperation, education and legislation.

For 40+ years, Clarence Baber has been farming organically in Hawaii. In the 1980s he co-founded the Hawaii Culinary Herb Association, in the early 1990s he co-founded the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association and the Hawaii Hemp Council (for sustainability reasons: food, fuel, fiber), and in 2012 he was a founding member of the board of directors for the Kohala Chapter of the Hawaii Farmers Union. Clarence also launched the first community supported agriculture (CSA) on Hawaii Island, feeding 50 families per week.

Always expanding his knowledge base, Clarence began incorporating regenerative and traditional farming practices into his organic farm in the 1980s. In 1992, the University of Hawaii studied his agricultural methods to better understand how they contributed to high yields per square foot and lower than normal pest challenges. 27 years ago, Clarence began incorporating effective microorganisms and ferments into his farming methods and has been producing a soil probiotic for 25 years.

For almost two decades Clarence advocated for hemp as a viable crop for Hawaii for building materials, food, and fuel to help move the islands towards greater sustainability. Between 2013 and 2015, he coordinated stakeholders from around the state on behalf of HFUU to help pass hemp legislation and was invited to assist with planting a research crop at the University of Hawaii.

Gail has been an active supporter of agriculture and serves as President of the Hawaii Hemp Farmers Association as well as a board member of the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation. Gail has volunteered over 8,000 to protect coastal open space on the North Kohala coast; home to the most numerous intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

The Baber's commitment to agriculture is sincere and deep. An agricultural easement will allow them to keep their farm and continue to contribute to Hawaii's food production as well as pass on decades of knowledge to the next generation of farmers.

Sincerely,

Kaipo Kekona

Kaipo Kekona

President, *Hawaii Farmers Union United*



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

November 1, 2023

RE: Letter of Support for Funding Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement

To Whom It May Concern:

Since 1948, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB) has served as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture, to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural members who produce food, flowers, energy, and more, for Hawai'i's communities.

Representing nearly 1,800 farm family members statewide, it is my pleasure to support funding of an agricultural easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm farmed by Clarence and Gail Baber.

Agricultural easements can help solve some of the challenges facing Hawai'i by allowing Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers to dedicate their land in perpetuity to agriculture while providing a financial boost that often allows the farmer, rancher, or the next generation in an agricultural family to remain in operation.

For 40+ years Clarence has been farming in Hawai'i and has played a key role instrumental in advancing organic farming, co-founding the Hawai'i Culinary Herb Association in the 1980s and the Hawai'i Organic Farmers Association in the 1990s. In 1992, the University of Hawai'i studied his agricultural methods to better understand how they contributed to high yields per square foot and lower-than-normal pest challenges.

Both Clarence and Gail Baber have been instrumental in furthering Hawai'i's hemp industry to provide options for moving the islands towards greater sustainability with a crop that can be used in building materials and as a food and fuel source. Between 2013 and 2016, Clarence coordinated with stakeholders from around the state to help pass hemp legislation and was invited to assist with planting a research crop at the University of Hawai'i. Gail serves as President of the Hawai'i Hemp Farmers Association and has volunteered over 8,000 hours to protect coastal open space and agricultural lands on the North Kohala coast, home to the most numerous intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

An agricultural easement will allow the Babers to continue farming and share decades of important farming knowledge with the next generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Miyamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian Miyamoto
Executive Director, Hawai'i Farm Bureau

May 8, 2024



RE: Support for Agricultural Easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm

To Whom It May Concern:

The Kohala Food HUB is a mission driven organization focused on growing Hawaii's food system by providing essential services for farmers and food businesses and increasing community access to fresh local food. We connect our local residents and businesses as well as visitors to the island to fresh, nutrient dense locally grown and made food via multiple channels including our online market, a multi-Farm CSA program, various food programs in partnership with other organizations and agencies, free community food distributions, 'ulu aggregation for Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative, and supplying wholesale accounts for local resorts and restaurants.

We intimately understand the challenges of agriculture in Hawaii and maintaining the viability of a farm long-term. Agricultural easements that dedicate land in-perpetuity to agriculture are a win-win for Hawaii, ensuring important ag lands are preserved for future farmers while providing an important infusion of funding to current farmers that supports financial stability and investment back into the farm to expand food production.

For 40+ years, Clarence Baber has been farming organically in Hawaii. In the 1980s he co-founded the Hawaii Culinary Herb Association, in the early 1990s he co-founded the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association and the Hawaii Hemp Council (for sustainability reasons: food, fuel, fiber), and in 2012 he was a founding member of the board of directors for the Kohala Chapter of the Hawaii Farmers Union. Clarence also launched the first community supported agriculture (CSA) project in the 1980's on Hawaii Island, feeding 50 families per week.

Always expanding his knowledge base, Clarence began incorporating regenerative and traditional farming practices into his organic farm in the '80s. In 1992, the University of Hawaii studied his agricultural methods to better understand how they contributed to high yields per square foot and lower than normal pest challenges. 27 years ago, Clarence began incorporating effective microorganisms and ferments into his farming methods and has been producing a soil probiotic for 25 years.

For almost two decades Clarence advocated for hemp as a viable crop for Hawaii for building materials, food, and fuel to help move the islands towards greater sustainability. Between 2013 and 2015, he coordinated stakeholders from around the state on behalf of HFUU to help pass hemp legislation and was invited to assist with planting a research crop at the University of Hawaii.

Gail has been an active supporter of agriculture and serves as President of the Hawaii Hemp Farmers Association as well as a board member of the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation. Gail has volunteered over 8,000 to protect coastal open space on the North Kohala coast; home to the most numerous intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

The Baber's commitment to agriculture is sincere and impactful and this agricultural easement will allow them to continue farming and expand production.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maya Parish", written over a white background.

Maya Parish

Director, Kohala Food HUB

*Office of Councilwoman Cindy Evans
County of Hawai'i
Council District 9 -
Kohala, portions of Waimea*



*Hilo: (808) 961-8564
Kohala: (808) 889-6512
Fax: (808) 961-8912
E-mail: cindy.evans@hawaiicounty.gov*

CYNTHIA F. W. "CINDY" EVANS
HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 9

*25 Aupuni St., Ste. 1402, Hilo, HI 96720
74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg. A, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
Old Kohala Courthouse, 54-3900 'Akoni Pule Hwy., Kapa'au, HI 96755*

November 2, 2023

RE: Support for Funding of an Agricultural Easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to provide you with this letter of support for funding of an agricultural easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm.

Clarence Baber is a pioneer in Hawai'i's modern regenerative and organic movement, having co-founded the Culinary Herb Association in the 1980s, the Hawai'i Organic Farmers Association in the 1990s, the Kohala Chapter of the Farmers Union in 2012. He has been farming in Hawaii for over forty years.

The proposed agricultural easement will allow the Babers to continue farming and passing on decades of invaluable farming knowledge and wisdom to future generations.

Importantly, the regenerative and traditional farming practices used at Nani Kai Hoku farm are beneficial for mitigating climate change and stabilizing micro-environments on a local level, including supporting an undisturbed and optimal soil microbiome without till farming; carbon sequestration; maintaining and expanding pollinator habitat and keeping beehives; minimizing water use with mulch and effective microorganisms; elimination of poisons to protect birds of prey and water sources (groundwater and nearby gulches), etc.

The Babers are active in my district and in their community mentoring younger farmers and students. Gail is a passionate supporter of local agriculture and serves as President of the Hawai'i Hemp Farmers Association as well as a board member of the Hawai'i Farmers Union Foundation and has been instrumental in preserving coastal open space on the North Kohala coast, home to the largest number of intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

I hope that you will give this matter favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cindy Evans
Hawai'i County Council, District 9

May 8, 2024

Re: Support for Agenda Item 8-C, Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement

Dear Board of Land and Natural Resources,

As the former Executive Director for the North Kohala Community Resource Center, I had the opportunity to work with over 120 community-based projects. I worked with the landowners of Nani Kai Hoku Farm on two projects, one to preserve coastal open space and cultural sites and the other to provide regenerative educational opportunities for the community.

Agriculture and food security have been a community focus and priority for nearly 20 years in Kohala. However, like many areas in Hawaii, despite some of the best agricultural soils in the state, the turnover of farmers and loss of farms in Kohala continues. Agricultural easements are an important strategy to keep farms in farmers' hands.

The Nani Kai Hoku landowners have a deep commitment to North Kohala and given the number of large estate and luxury homes that have been built in the last 20 years that don't include agriculture, I urge the support of the agricultural easement.

Mahalo Nui,

Christine Richardson
hawinini@hotmail.com
808-895-6108



November 2, 2023

Re: Support for Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement - Regional Benefit

To Whom It May Concern,

Clarence Baber of Nani Kai Hoku Farm has been making and selling a locally made soil probiotic for 27 years as well as a mineral mix and a Super Soil product sourced primarily from on-farm and on-island materials.

Hawaii's imported fertilizer costs are often 40% more than on the mainland, while farms typically generate just half of the income of mainland farmers. With supply chain disruptions of the last couple of years, Hawaii farmers were pinched even harder for fertilizers, which often are 20% of a farm's expenses.

Locally made, quality soil amendments are critical to the long-term viability and security of Hawaii agriculture.

We urge you to fund the Nani Kai Hoku agricultural easement. The Babers have contributed significantly to agriculture in Hawaii over the years and the easement will help this contribution to continue.

Sincerely,

Dashiell Kuhr

Dash Kuhr,
Executive Director
Hawai'i Institute of Pacific Agriculture (HIP Agriculture)

Janet Britt
213 Mahiehe St.
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

May 8, 2024

Re: Support for Agenda Item C-8, Nani Kai Hoku Farm Agricultural Easement

Aloha Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Janet Britt and I am speaking to you about the importance of the agricultural easement that Moku O Keawe Land Conservancy has proposed on the Nani Kai Hoku Farm.

I have worked in conservation for more than 40 years and whether my work was with Wyoming Ranchers or Hawaiian Farmers, the importance of conserving lands for agricultural production has never been more critical than now, when prime farmlands are being converted to residential development. I feel that supporting our smaller acreage farms and their owners is critical to the conservation of those resources that we in Hawaii hold dear, including healthy soils, protection of water resources, and habitat for the Hoary Bat, numerous bird species and invertebrates. I first met Gail and Clarence Baber when I moved to Hawaii 13 years ago. The Baber's were already discussing and planning for an agricultural easement then.

Land Use Planning efforts by our local government on Hawaii Island as well as in Governor Green's Statewide efforts, rank food security and resiliency as critical components of land use plans, especially with climate change requiring innovative farming methods that can adapt to changes in rainfall, temperature, and natural cycles. Located on land that is classified as Prime Agricultural Land, Nani Kai Hoku Farm produces and distributes thirteen certified organically grown crops in the Kohala area. The Farm employs no-till and mulching to protect the soil microbiome, to conserve water, and to continually build healthy soil. An added benefit to conserving Nani Kai Hoku farm is that the owners have decades of farming experience and have passed that on to young farmers who they mentor as well as to community members who have questions on specific ag issues, such as invasives, mulching, and no-till farming.

I have readily agreed to help draft the legal documents as well as provide annual monitoring reports to the Legacy Land Commission, as I feel the agricultural easement on Nani Kai Hoku Farm is critical to our efforts in conserving prime lands in the Kohala district.

Mahalo for your time.

Janet Britt

**Kohala Lihikai
P.O. Box 76
Hawi, Hawaii 96719**

January 27, 2024

RE: Support for Agricultural Easement for Nani Kai Hoku Farm

To Whom It May Concern,

Kohala Lihikai is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and preserving land and nearshore environments and to support the sustainable management of these lands. The agricultural easement project for Nani Kai Hoku Farm is consistent with Kohala Lihikai's mission: the farm uses organic and regenerative agricultural methods that restore ecosystem functions that were significantly altered during sugar cane cultivation, including re-establishing a healthy soil microbiome, healthy hydrologic watershed functions, and pollinator habitat, as well as other practices that capture carbon.

For 40+ years, Clarence Baber has been farming regeneratively and organically in Hawaii, co-founding the Hawaii Culinary Herb Association in the 1980s, the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association and the Hawaii Hemp Council (for sustainability reasons: food, fuel, fiber) in the early 1990s, and launched the first community supported agriculture (CSA) project in the 1980's on Hawaii Island, feeding 50 families per week. Clarence began integrating traditional farming methods early in his career including planting with moon phases, companion planting, and cultivating native plants for on-site fertilization, etc. His farming methods were studied by the University of Hawaii in the 1990s to understand the high yields per square foot.

Gail has been an active supporter of agriculture and serves as President of the Hawaii State Hemp Farmers Association as well as a board member of the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation. Gail has volunteered over 8,000 hours to protect coastal open space on the North Kohala coast; home to the most numerous intact archeological and cultural sites in the state.

Kohala Lihikai supports funding of this easement project.

Sincerely,
Joseph Carvalho
Joseph Carvalho
President

May 8, 2024

Vincent Kimura
45-515 Apiki St. Kaneohe, HI 96744
vincent.kimura@gmail.com
808-628-0218

Board of Land and Natural Resources

Dear Board Members,

I am writing in strong support of the agricultural easement application submitted by Clarence Baber and Gail Byrne Baber, owners of Nani Kai Hoku Farm in North Kohala. This easement, facilitated by Moku o Keawe Land Conservancy (MOKU), is vital for preserving the agricultural integrity of this region and securing a sustainable future for farming in Hawaii.

Clarence Baber and Gail Byrne Baber have been stewards of the land for over 40 years, demonstrating unwavering commitment to sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation. Their dedication to regenerative and natural farming methods, including no-till practices, effective microorganism utilization, and composting, has not only produced nutrient-dense food but also nurtured a thriving ecosystem on their farm.

In the almost decade that I have known Gail and Clarence, they have been two of the most supportive, collaborative and giving individuals to their community. As members and leaders of the Hawaii Organic Farming Association, to which they helped found, to the Hawaii Farmers Union United, I have seen them share and hold free classes, training and workshops on all topics that would help growers throughout our state. I've personally visited just about every farming region in Hawai'i, and even more across 4 continents around the world. Farming is tough, and the risk factors for success are ever changing and compounding; what Clarence and Gail bring is a win-win mindset to ensure all growers have the innovative tools and community to thrive. The Nani Kai Hoku Farm serves as a nucleus for agricultural knowledge and community access, offering certified organic produce to local markets and supporting food security initiatives. By protecting this farm, we ensure their success and the continuation of important ecological functions, such as windbreaks and roosting sites for endangered species like the I'o, Pueo, and Hawaiian hoary bat.

May 8, 2024

Furthermore, this easement is critical in the face of urban encroachment, with development threatening to encroach within 900 feet of the farm. Without this protection, the farm faces the risk of being sold for estate development, leading to the loss of valuable agricultural land.

I urge the Board of Land and Natural Resources to confirm the award of funds to this project, supporting the Babers' efforts to pay off their mortgage, invest in farm infrastructure, and expand production. Their vision and dedication to sustainable agriculture are invaluable to the community and the state, and this easement is a crucial step in securing a sustainable future for farming in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Vincent Kimura