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Subject: Safety, Economic Development and Government Affairs Committee  
Testimony concerning Resolution 12-57

Date: 2 April 2012

To: kmiller@honolulu.gov; jtachibana@honolulu.gov

Dear Chairman Tulsi Gabbard and the Honolulu City Council Committee on Safety,  
Economic Development and Government Affairs:

I oppose the proposed Resolution 12-57 concerning the GMO labeling mandate.

I urge you, dear Chairman Tulsi Gabbard and the Honolulu City Council Committee on  
Safety, Economic Development and Government Affairs, to consider my request to  
oppose Resolution 12-57 which would require labeling of genetically engineered food.

A law requiring labeling will add a burden to the farmers who are struggling with the  
double jeopardy of low farm prices and increased costs of labor and inputs such as  
fertilizer, sprays to control plant pests, and also, the cost of gasoline and shipping.

I feel that we all have a right to eat what we want to eat, and the market already appears  
to be able to help customers distinguish between GE and non-GE food. It's a matter of  
preference, and not a matter between life and death.

GE foods, such as Rainbow and SunUp papaya were developed following strict  
adherence to US government protocols, and a devoted committment by scientists to offer  
both consumer and farmer stakeholders a delicious and appealing product that is also  
nourishing to our bodies. Moreover, these papayas were developed by the public sector,  
and not by large mega-companies which strike terror in the heart of anti-GE activists.  
You'd think activists would look at the good that has been accomplished by independent  
scientists, and foster more such success.

Genetic engineering is a wonderful tool that can help protect our food supply from the  
scourge of diseases that are here today, and those that are to come. It is my opinion that  
Resolution 12-57 specifically targets the new papaya varieties. Proponents of this  
resolution spit in the face of my husband, Dennis Gonsalves and others who have worked  
tirelessly to develop and commercialize the Rainbow and SunUp papayas for farmers and  
consumers.

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They spit in the face of farmers, many of whom depend on their farm to help make ends meet economically, because they don't earn enough in their other jobs. Recently, farmers have told me that they can barely afford to pay for labor costs when extra help is needed on the farm. Also, a quick look at reports by the Agricultural Statistics Service has shown little increase in fresh fruit price (the amount that farmers make) from 0.35 cents per pound in 1998 to 0.38 cents per pound in 2010.

Passing Resolution 12-57 will certainly increase hardship on our papaya farmers due to increased costs. In the end, we all will lose! Please strike down Resolution 12-57.

Yours truly,  
Carol Gonsalves