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Chamber of
Sustainable
Commerce
P.O. Box 22394
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Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair
Comm. on Commerce & Consumer Protection

Tuesday, March 20, 2024
9:30 AM in Room 229

RE: **HB2298 HD1** Consumer Protections-Coffee -**Support w/Amendments**



Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga & Committee Members,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 100 small businesses across the State of Hawaii that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity; we know Hawaii can strengthen its economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment.

We support **HB2298, in its original form**, which makes it a violation of the coffee labeling law to use a geographic origin in labeling or advertising for roasted coffee, instant coffee, or ready-to-drink coffee beverage blends that contain less than a certain percentage of coffee by weight from that geographic origin, phased in to one hundred per cent; and authorize retailers who, by June 30, 2024, purchase roasted coffee, instant coffee, or ready-to-drink coffee beverage blends that use a geographic origin in labeling or advertising containing less than twenty per cent Hawaii-grown coffee by weight, to sell-off their coffee inventory that does not comply with labeling requirements until December 31, 2024.

This is about protecting consumers and Hawaii's coffee farmers from product dilution and brand degradation. It is absurd that legislators have allocated more than \$80M/year of taxpayer money building the "Hawaii" brand identity and marketing "Hawaii" to the world; then turn around and allow Hawaii's locally grown coffee to be diluted by lesser, cheaper, imported coffee and passed off to consumers as "Hawaii-grown".

It is time to require clear and factual labeling regarding the percentage of Hawaii-grown coffee being sold for all consumer products containing coffee labeled as Hawaii-grown. **The HD1 version aims at "half-truth" (50%). We urge this committee to strive for absolute truth in labeling - which should always be 100% true, and return HB2298 to its original version.**