



April 29, 2020

State of Hawai'i Public Utilities Commission
465 South King Street, Room 103
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Young Brothers Proposed Amendments to Tariffs, Transmittal No. 20-0003

PUC Commissioners,

We would like to register our opposition to Young Brothers' changes to its sailing schedule for the following reasons:

On March 31st, Young Brothers announced that they would stop the shipment of livestock in less than 20' or 40' container loads in an effort to reduce personal contact due to Covid-19. However, the point of contact between shipping the 'less than container loads' is exactly the same as shipping the 20' or 40' containers. This unauthorized shift in their shipping protocol has had a tremendous negative impact on sheep and goat producers in the state, specially small producers. Many of them will never be able to recover financially. How is it that they are able to make this move and bypass the PUC's oversight?

Now, Young Brothers wants to reduce the number of sailings in their schedule, adversely impacting the remaining producers in the market and further eroding our ability to provide sustenance to our communities.

- Less sailings equates to less movement of essential foodstuff across the entire state
- Smaller and more isolated islands such as Moloka'i who are not able to raise their own products will suffer further shortages
- Producer's costs will increase to such levels that will make it impossible to stay in the market and provide fresh local products to our communities
- This will also inhibit new producers from entering the market
- The gap in shipping days for multi-island loads will force producers to:
 1. Pay for additional transfers in and out of ports
 2. Force them to find places to keep their animals and feed them until the next connecting shipping day
 3. Cause further stress to the livestock
- Current inventories will sit idle while costing producers more money to maintain with purchased feed as we get closer to Summer when dry conditions limit pasture growth

These additional burdens to producers will cascade into higher costs to the consumer who is also suffering from a loss of income due to the impacts of Covid-19. It will also further our dependency on imported food and lessen our ability to provide our communities with local Hawaiian grown food.

The industry needs your support if we are going to survive and be competitive in this market. Our way of life is being threatened by greed and callous apathy. As this current pandemic has starkly illustrated, Hawaii should not drift to further dependence on a tourism economy which, in turn, causes greater dependence on imported foods. Rather, we should work to strengthen our own internal agriculture. The very foundation of achieving this is to protect Hawaii's small farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for keeping our concerns in mind as you make this and all future decisions.

Sincerely,

Sandra Tran
President, Hawai'i Sheep and Goat Association

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