

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
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ENFORCEMENT
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025
9:30 AM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 915, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO WATER USE**

House Bill 915, House Draft 1, proposes to: authorize the Board of Agriculture to investigate and survey the availability of nonpotable water; authorize the Commission on Water Resource Management, as a condition for issuing permits, to require the use of dual line water supply systems in new residential and mixed-use developments located in designated water management areas; authorize those residential and mixed-use developments to be included in irrigation projects, as defined in chapter 167, HRS; and require the Department of Health, Board of Agriculture, and counties to update their rules, ordinances, to allow dual line water supply systems in residential and mixed-use developments. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure and offers the following comments:**

Section 3

The Department supports the use of alternative water sources for appropriate use and supports the proposed amendments to §174C-51.5, HRS, which expands the Commission's authority to require dual line water systems to residential and mixed-use developments in designated water management areas.

Section 4

The Department has concerns about removing the requirement of a recycled water manager to oversee operation and maintenance of a recycled water distribution system for single-family residential homes. While this requirement may be seen as a barrier to expanding reuse, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Reuse Guidelines Volume II was carefully developed with input from reuse professionals and stakeholders to ensure that these systems are operated and maintained in a manner that protects public health. As such, the Department concurs with DOH testimony on House Bill 915 suggesting revisions

to the measure permitting irrigation of single-family residences with the designation of a recycled water manager, and appreciates the changes made in HD1 to incorporate these amendments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0915 HD1
RELATING TO WATER USE.

REPRESENTATIVE KIRSTIN KAHALOA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

February 12, 2025; 9:30 am; Room Number: 415

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** None.
- 2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health ("Department") supports this measure.
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Management Division Wastewater Branch
- 4 (EMD-WWB) provides the following testimony on behalf of the Department.
- 5 The Department supports residential and mixed-use developments being included in
- 6 irrigation projects provided that the water shall be sourced from county-supplied R-1 water.
- 7 **Offered Amendments:** None.
- 8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

HOUSE BILL NO. 915, H.D. 1
RELATING TO WATER USE

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 915, HD1. This bill authorizes the Commission on Water Resource Management, as a condition for issuing permits, to require the use of dual line water supply systems in new residential and mixed-use developments located in designated water management areas. Further, it authorizes those residential and mixed-use developments to be included in irrigation projects, as defined in chapter 167, HRS and authorizes the Board of Agriculture to investigate and survey the availability of non-potable water. Lastly, it requires the Department of Health, Board of Agriculture, and the counties to update their rules, ordinances, to allow dual line water supply systems in residential and mixed-use developments. The Department of Agriculture (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure with the following concerns and offers comments.

The Department has concerns that the measure requires the Department's irrigation program to provide services that would require research, training and resources to perform activities at this detail. The irrigation program provides irrigation water to commercial scale farms (five acres or larger) and includes individual house lots



or apartment complexes to water lawns, personal plants, and possibly interior non-potable use would require additional resources to operate and maintain these types of systems, which would be a competing use for limited irrigation water. To scale up for this, the Department estimates at least a tripling of staff size, additional and major equipment costs, as operations would need to add heavy equipment, operators, irrigation system workers, clerical, engineers, managers, and others, as well as land/facilities for larger base yards. The Department respectfully suggests that the county departments of water supply or public works may be more suited to perform these tasks as many of these county departments maintain applicable fleets and facilities.

The Department questions the feasibility and position within the irrigation program, currently overseeing bona fide agriculture operations, of a system such as this. Previous discussions with purveyors of reclaimed water have consistently suggested the Department may be charged for the R-1 water. The Department would then have to pass on the charge to its system users. The Department is currently reviewing its current water delivery rate of approximately 50 cents per thousand gallons. Without additional financial assistance, we estimate the current cost for operations at \$1.25 or more per thousand gallons delivered. The additional costs identified previously would likely significantly increase this figure. If we assume the county will charge the Department approximately \$1.50 per thousand gallons delivered, the combined delivery rate would start around \$3 per thousand gallons delivered. This large burden of increased costs should be considered for nearly all agricultural operations to bear. Lastly, the installation cost may be borne by the developers and may likely lead to more expensive homes.

The Department respectfully suggests that if this measure moves forward, the implementation be given to applicable county departments, and the Department of Agriculture's Irrigation Program continues to support bona fide commercial scale agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.