



STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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TESTIMONY OF ALFREDO LEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TUESDAY, MARCH 03, 2009
6:30 p.m.
ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 243 HD 1
RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 243 HD 1. The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) appreciates the intent of this measure but has concerns about the ability of the state to fund the repairs given the current economic conditions.

Since 1999, the ADC has been involved in or responsible for managing various irrigation systems, which include Waiahole, West Kauai, East Kauai, and Kau. We are therefore aware that major repairs are badly needed for these and other systems. Completion of major repairs would allow such systems throughout the state to optimize their potential to irrigate tens of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land.

LINDA LINGLE
Governor

SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 Fax: (808) 973-9613

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009; 6:30 P.M.
ROOM 308**

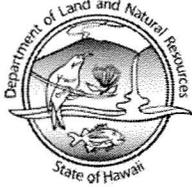
**HOUSE BILL NO. 243, H.D. 1
RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

Chairperson Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 243, H.D. 1. This bill makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture for capital improvement projects. Despite the merits of the idea, the Department of Agriculture cannot support this bill because the expenditures proposed are outside of the Executive Biennium Budget.

The need for Hawaii to become more independent from food imports is vital. The irrigation systems developed by the old plantations and new systems being developed now are critical components in this effort. The goal of self-sustainability requires that we, as an industry, significantly increase the percentage of locally grown food. These irrigation systems have the potential to speed the transition to self-sustainability by providing a reliable and affordable source of irrigation water to the farmer.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

LAURA H. THELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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

Transmittal Cover Sheet for
Department of Land and Natural Resources Testimony

Date Submitted: March 2, 2009

Testifier's Name/Position/Title: Ken Kawahara, Commission on Water Resource Management
Division Administrator and Deputy Director

Committee the comments are directed to: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE (FIN)

The Date & Time of Hearing: Tuesday, March 3, 2009
6:30 PM, Conference, Room 308

Measure Number: HB 243 HD 1 RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Number of Copies the Committee is Requesting: In paper, 2 copies (including original) to
Room 306 in the State Capitol

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2009
6:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 243, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

House Bill 243, House Draft 1 proposes to: 1) Change the name of the existing irrigation repair maintenance special fund to the agricultural infrastructure improvement special fund and expand the list of irrigation-related items for which funds from this special fund may be used to include agricultural water and land planning, and 2) Authorize and appropriate general obligation bond funds for improvements to various irrigation systems throughout the State, and for the Agricultural Water Use Development Plan. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) recognizes the importance of long-range water planning for agriculture, which is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Hawaii Water Plan. The Department understands that the Department of Agriculture (DOA) has included an appropriation for the Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan in their executive biennium budget request. As such, the Department supports their budget request. The Department defers to DOA for comments regarding the capital improvements of the irrigation systems throughout the State.

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
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BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
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Ken Fukuoka

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.maui-county.gov/council

March 2, 2009

TO: Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Joseph Pontanilla, Council Member

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Pontanilla".

DATE: Tuesday March 3, 2009

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB 243, HD1 RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure. The purpose of this act is to:

1. Change the name of the existing irrigation repair and maintenance special fund to the agricultural infrastructure improvement special fund and expand the list of irrigation-related items for which funds from this special fund may be used to include agricultural water and land planning;
2. authorize and appropriate general obligation bond funds for improvements to various irrigation systems throughout the state, and for the agricultural water use and development plan.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support HB 243, HD1 for the following reasons:

1. Broadens scope of the funding resource to aid advancement of studies for agricultural water and land planning.
2. To insure that the irrigation systems through out the state, including vital Maui County systems, are improved and receive steady and dependable supply of water.
3. Lingering drought and near-drought conditions continue to affect the entirety of Maui County's agricultural trade as well as cause risk to Maui County's green environment and native species. Funds provided by this legislation will enhance irrigation system capability and forward effort in address of these concerns.

I urge your support of this measure.

09:03:02:kbm/JP: HB243HD1



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

Administration: P.O. Box 100, Kunia, HI 96759

Ph: 808-621-1350/Fax: 808-621-1359

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

HOUSE BILL 243 HD 1 Relating to Irrigation Systems

March 3, 2009

Chairman Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

My name is Stephanie Whalen. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC). I am testifying today on behalf of the center and our research and support staff.

HARC strongly supports House Bill 243 HD1 which proposes measures to support irrigation systems throughout the islands.

HARC is appreciative for this body's unfaltering support throughout the years in providing financial commitments to the state's irrigation infrastructure. Water is an essential element for successful agriculture and your actions demonstrate your awareness of that fact.

HARC strongly supports a special fund to facilitate and expedite the repair and maintenance of the state's irrigation systems and to support planning activities for agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Hawaii's agricultural needs.



TESTIMONY

House Finance Committee

RE: HB 243 HD1 Relating to Irrigation Systems

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

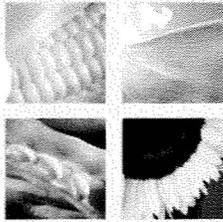
Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of its member farmers and ranchers is in support, with amendments, of HB243 HD1, providing CIP funding for Irrigation Systems across the State.

The Agricultural industry's most important ingredient is reliable irrigation water. This Bill will provide the funding to repair, rehabilitate, and improve existing irrigation systems. These systems are situated in regions now under active agriculture. This Bill supports initiatives to grow and buy local produce and will sustain the farm employment by allowing existing farms to increase their production with adequate irrigation water availability. Increased "home grown" production will reduce threats of invasive species from places across the ocean and increase our level of biosecurity.

There are two sections within the measure that specifically identify irrigation systems. The Kau system which will provide for the expanding agricultural ventures occupying lands formerly grown by Kau Sugar Company is missing from Section 3. These farms are producing commercial coffee that is recognized in the marketplace for its' quality. They show great potential and have farmers ready and willing to pick up the challenges of expanding their operations. Water is needed for this and so we respectfully request that the Ka'u System be added to Section 3.

We respectfully request your support of HB243 with the suggested amendments. If there are questions, please contact Paul Matsuo who is HFBF's advisor on Water Infrastructure matters. He can be contacted at 8395040.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our views on this matter.



Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti
HB 243hd1, Relating to Irrigation Systems
House Finance Committee
Tuesday, March 3, 2009
Room 308, 6:30 pm – Agenda #10

Position: Strong Support

Chair Oshiro and Members of the House FIN Committee:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association. The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) is a nonprofit trade association representing the agricultural seed industry in Hawaii. Now the state's largest agricultural commodity, the seed industry contributes to the economic health and diversity of the islands by providing high quality jobs in rural communities, keeping important agricultural lands in agricultural use, and serving as responsible stewards of Hawaii's natural resources.

Your strong support is needed for this appropriations request for this fund that will add positions to manage the irrigation systems statewide, and implement the Agriculture Water Use Development Plan. Such an appropriation provides farmers with accessible and more consistent water flow. Without that there will be no farms, even with the most fertile agriculture lands available.

We urge your support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HCIA 2008-2009
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director@hciaonline.com
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Maui Land & Pineapple Company Inc.

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of HB 243

Aloha Chair Oshiro and Finance Committee Members. My Name is Wes Nohara. I am the General Manager for Maui Land & Pineapple Company Agricultural Operations.

I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB 243. This bill is important for the future and success of Hawaii's agriculture. With clean reliable and affordable water, our farmewrs cannot coninue to provide food and Ag products to our people of Hawaii. Our Maui farmers have competed with environmental, residential and urban demands for water.

This Bill will appropriate the needed funds to develop, maintain and improve needed agricultural water systems through out the Sate of Hawaii. We have seen Agriculture lose water allocations to other uses and at the same time the infrastructure and transmission systems have shown gradual derterioration. Our Agricultural sector of our local economy needs your support to keep it viable, by passing this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Wesley Nohara
General Manager
Maui Land & Pineapple Co., Inc.

Maui County Farm Bureau

An Affiliate of the American Farm Bureau Federation and Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation
Serving Maui's Farmers and Ranchers
P.O. Box 148 Kula, Hawaii 96790

TESTIMONY

House Committee on Finance
RE: HB 243 HD1 RELATING TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Maui County Farm Bureau is Maui's general agricultural advocacy organization. We represent farm and ranch families and organizations. MCFB is in strong support of HB243, requesting CIP funds for irrigation systems across the State.

The continued support by the State Legislature has provided for the installation of the Upcountry Dual Line to this date. This provides an excellent example of State funding leveraged with Federal funding. The project is large and so is occurring in phases but we expect to see it in use in a very short time. Continued funding of this measure is critical for its' completion. At the same time, a new project to provide new sources of water for this project is critical. In its' current form, during water short times, users of the system will be the first to be cut off since public safety needs must be first addressed. As a system totally reliant on surface water and located in a drought prone district, this new project to identify new water sources is critical.

We appreciate your past support of our irrigation projects and respectfully request your continued investment into our systems by passing this measure. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren K. Watanabe
Executive Director

Ka'u Farm Bureau
PO Box 1109
Naalehu, Hawai'i
96772
808-929-9550

March 2, 2009

RE: HB 243

Testimony in Support with Amendment

Aloha Chairman Oshiro and esteemed Representatives,

The Ka'u Farm Bureau represents 35 farm families and offers this testimony in **strong support of HB 243 with the following amendment:**

Section 2, Page 3, line 6, item (14) includes: "Ka'u Irrigation System". Oddly, the Ka'u Irrigation System is not included on page 5, Section 3. Please make the necessary amendment to include the Ka'u Irrigation System.

More than ten years after the collapse of the sugar industry, the economic vacuum left in its wake has yet to be filled in the rural communities of Ka'u.

With its abundance of agricultural lands, Ka'u is ideally suited for agricultural projects that will foster sustainability, food security, disaster preparedness and drought resistance. Investment in irrigation infrastructure projects will stimulate job creation and support job retention by creating an environment in which agriculture can thrive.

More than two years ago, working with the ADC, a group of energetic farmers, ranchers, landowners and other stakeholders have formed an agricultural water co-operative designed to advance the planning, permitting, investment and infrastructure associated with irrigation systems necessary to support agriculture in Ka'u. Since that time, much progress has been made in terms of planning and permitting. It is exactly this type of public and private partnership that has made this effort a success to date.

Investing in irrigation in Ka'u is an investment in agriculture and makes sense on many levels. It will assist with the transition from a plantation-based economy to a diversified agricultural model. In addition to offering new opportunities and a significant leverage on the investment, it promotes the perpetuation of a traditional lifestyle and social sustainability by offering options for people to work close to where they live. This will serve to help keep families together. Less travel means more family time, improved quality of life and less strain on public infrastructure, including roadways and law enforcement. Additionally, the workforce receives more value for their labor; keeping more of what they earn by spending less money on fuel and travel related expenses.

Please join me and the Ka'u Farm Bureau by offering your support of this critical measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

I remain sincerely,



Chris Manfredi
President

Kuahiwi Contractors, Inc./Kuahiwi Ranch
PO Box 294
Naalehu HI 96772

RE: HB 243 HD1

Aloha Honorable Representatives:

The availability of agricultural water is the foundation on which a vital local agricultural economy can be built. Agriculture is the foundation of any truly sustainable economy.

Please support HB 243 HD1 and in particular, please include the Ka'u Agricultural Water System in this bill.

Mahalo,

Michelle Galimba