





## Testimony of

# Hawaii Council of Mayors

Bernard Carvalho, Jr., Mayor of Kauai County Mufi Hannemann, Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu William P. Kenoi, Mayor of Hawaii County Charmaine Tavares, Mayor of Maui County

Before a Hearing of the
House Committee on Agriculture
House Committee on Water, Land, and Ocean Resources

March 29, 2010

House Resolution 119 and House Concurrent Resolution 184
Requesting that the Legislature Convene an Investigatory Public Hearing to Evaluate the Biosecurity Program by Examining State and County Policies and Practices that Affect the Availability of Water for Agriculture and Maintenance of Agricultural Irrigation Systems

The Hawaii Council of Mayors (HCOM) supports the Legislature's efforts to provide for discussions on the needs of our agricultural industry including calling for an "investigatory public hearing" on bio-security programs, the availability of water, and the maintenance of irrigation systems.



Mayor Billy Kenoi County of Hawaii 25 Aupuni Street Hilo, Hawaii 96720



Mayor Mufi Hannemann City and County of Honolulu 530 South King Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr. County of Kauai 4444 Rice Street, Suite 235 Lihue, Hawaii 96766



Mayor Charmaine Tavares County of Maui 200 South High Street, 9th Floor Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Agriculture's future is dependent on availability of affordable and reliable water supplies. Collaboration amongst all parties—public and private—is critical. Our commitment to these issues is reflected in our individual county efforts to comply with the planning requirement mandated by the State Water Code, Chapter 174-C, HRS. Convening the major policymakers, as envisioned by these resolutions, would complement and bolster our ongoing planning work with respect to a sustainable water supply and delivery system. We look forward to the discussions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

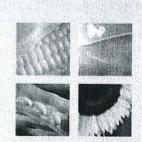
Aloha,

Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.

Mayor of Kauai

Mufi Hannemann Mayor of Honolulu

William P. Kenoi Mayor of Hawaii Charmaine Tavares Mayor of Maui



HCIA 2008-2009 Board of Directors

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Executive Director Alicia Maluafiti

# **Hawaii Crop Improvement Association**

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti
HR 119 / HCR 184, Requesting an Investigatory Public Hearing
The House Committee on Agriculture and
Committee on Water, Land, and Ocean Resources
Monday, March 29, 2010
Room 325, 10:30am

**Position: Support** 

Aloha Chair Tsuji and Ito, Vice Wooley and Har and members of the Committee:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of 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.

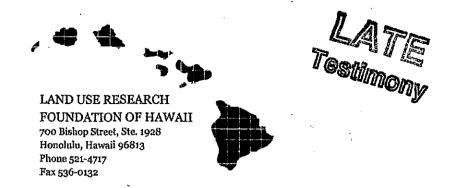
The Hawaii State Constitution recognizes the importance of agriculture and the state's duty to "conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands." Balancing that decree is the dual obligation of the state "to protect, control and regulate the use of Hawaii's water resources for the benefit of its people."

HCIA supports HCR 184/HR 119 because for too many years, our state has lacked a cohesive and collaborative approach to addressing the competing uses for water, despite the tireless efforts of the Commission on Water Resource Management and their staff. If we are to ensure the availability of water for future generations, then we must collectively learn to balance those needs. For the agricultural community, sustainability and food security cannot be achieved without water, yet farmers must continue to fight for that right to have equal access to the resource.

This resolution appropriately brings together the many vested stakeholders to take an integrated and comprehensive look at the policies dictating water use and address possible legislative and other policy solutions to ensure the viability of agriculture in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment.

91-1012 Kahl'uka Street 'Ewa Beach, HI 96706 Tel: (808) 224-3648 director@hciaonline.com www.hciaonline.com



Via: WLOTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

#### March 29, 2010

House Committees on Agriculture and Water, Land and Ocean Resources Hearing Date: Monday, March 29, 2010 at 10:30 in CR 325

Comments to HR119/HCR 184

REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATURE CONVENE AN INVESTIGATORY PUBLIC HEARING TO EVALUATE THE BIOSECURITY PROGRAM BY EXAMINING STATE AND COUNTY POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT AFFECT THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER FOR AGRICULTURE AND MAINTENANCE OF AGRICULTURAL IRRIGATION SYSTEMS.

Honorable Chair Clift Tsuji, Vice Chair Jessica Wooley and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Honorable Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Sharon Har, and Members of the House Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources,

My name is Dave Arakawa, and I am the Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

HR 119/HCR184. The purpose of these Resolutions are to ensure that the policies and practices of state and county agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Commission on Water Resource Management, Public Utilities Commission, Agribusiness Development Corporation, each county department of water supply, and each county planning department (agencies), enable and promote the availability of water for agricultural production and the maintenance of agricultural systems.

These Resolutions are requesting that the legislature convene a joint investigatory public hearing for the purpose of:

Chair Clift Tsuji, Vice Chair Jessica Wooley & Members House Committee on Agriculture Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Sharon Har & Members House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources March 29, 2010 Page 2

- Investigating the policies and practices of the various state and county agencies' permitting, approvals, and decisions that affect the availability of water for agricultural production and the maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems; and
- (2) Identifying any statutory or other amendments that may be necessary to promote and meet the objectives of the biosecurity program;

<u>Background</u>. In 2008, a biosecurity program was established by addition Part VI to Chapter 150A. Particularly, §150A-51 Biosecurity program; establishment, which required that the department of agriculture shall establish a biosecurity program authorized under this chapter that shall interface with other relevant state law; provided that the biosecurity program is not inconsistent with federal law.

**LURF'S Position.** LURF generally supports the intent of these Resolutions, but **respectfully requests that along with holding a public hearing the agencies offer solutions if water availability and irrigation deficiencies are at issue.** Access to water is necessary for successful agricultural operations. Moreover, sufficient quantities of water and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure are essential to support viable agricultural production on a scale necessary to meet the objectives of the biosecurity program. One of the actions identified to achieve the objectives of the biosecurity program is to promote the production of agricultural commodities in the State to reduce importation of goods into the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our <u>testimony in support</u> of HR 119 and HCR184.



2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819 Phone: (808) 848-2074; Neighbor Islands: 1-800-482-1272 Fax: (808) 848-1921; e-mail: info@hfbf.org



### TESTIMONY

RE: HR 119 Requesting that the legislature convene an investigatory public hearing to evaluate the biosecurity program by examining state and county policies and practices that affect the availability of water for agriculture and maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems.

Chair Tsuji, Chair Ito and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF) on behalf of our member commercial farm and ranch families and organizations is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HR119 that seeks to have a public hearing before the Legislature regarding the availability of water for agriculture to support the growth of agriculture for Hawaii's biosecurity.

The Legislature has expended many hours and resources to advance the needs of Biosecurity in Hawaii. An effective Biosecurity Plan will go a long ways to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy and have the many things that make Hawaii special ...the variety of agriculture providing for increased self sufficiency supported by a thriving environment often unique to the islands.

HFBF, since its' inception has strongly supported the Hawaii Biosecurity Plan. While the initial efforts largely focused on the prevention and control of invasive species which would help our farmers and ranchers, last year, sections were added in recognition that a strong local agricultural industry will go a long ways to support invasive species prevention. Growing high risk agricultural products locally would reduce the chances of introduction of new invasive species. This means the support mechanisms to have that industry must be in place.

Last week Hawaii Farm Bureau participated in discussions of what are the critical aspects of food security. We joined the Civil Defense in addressing how agriculture would assist in times of catastrophes or pandemics. While we discussed details, the key point is that we need to have a strong, productive, resilient industry in place before the catastrophic events. Significant levels of production will need to be occurring, with immediate capacity to transition to other crops at times of emergency. As long as lands are in active production with working infrastructure this can happen. Hawaii did it before during the World Wars. Our population has grown but we can still do it. However, the infrastructure must be in place.

A productive and resilient system is critical. Resiliency means the ability to recover from downturns, including problems in production. One of Hawaii's greatest threats to agriculture at this time is water. Farmers and ranchers across the state have taken major setbacks due to lack of water during droughts. At the same time, the Water Commission is challenged with

making decisions of how to balance water. State and Counties are faced with irrigation systems that need repair while many other areas do not have systems and face major production declines during droughts.

Solving all of these problems will happen if we have a cohesive plan with a unified vision of what agriculture needs. This public hearing, involving the major policymakers will go a long ways to providing a network as well as building an awareness of the needs.

Last week the unemployment status across the nation was announced. The States with the least impacts through the economic downturn have been the agricultural states. Agriculture is also a base industry. It provides the feedstock for value added production by other small businesses while providing for increased self sufficiency. It can provide export products to bring in much needed general fund revenue. And, most important it can provide the products and experiences that make Hawaii unique and special to our residents and visitors.

We respectfully ask for your strong support of this measure to provide an important element to the Growth of Agriculture within the Hawaii Biosecurity Plan. We also respectfully ask that the Mayors of the various Counties be included in the distribution of the resolution. The Planning and Water Departments carry out water initiatives. However, agriculture's access to water and its' viability crosses over into the well being of the County best addressed by the Chief Administrator which is the Mayor.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our insight into this important measure. If there are any questions, please call Mae Nakahata at 2819716.

The Twenty-Fifth Legislature Regular Session of 2010

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Committee on Agriculture

Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair

Rep. Jessica Wooley, Vice Chair

Committee on Water, Land, and Ocean Resources

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair

Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 Monday, March 29, 2010; 10:30 a.m.



STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.R. 119 / H.C.R. 184
Requesting that the Legislature Convene an Investigatory Public Hearing
to Evaluate the BiosecurityProgram by Examining State and County
Policies and Practices that Affect the Availability of Water for Agriculture
and Maintenance of Agricultural Irrigation Systems

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.R. 119 / H.C.R. 184 in large part because of its intent to promote the availability of water for agricultural production and the maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems.

Currently on Maui, there exists a dispute between agricultural interests. On one hand, farmers in Hana want to have streams diverted for their crops. These farmers are small and mostly grow taro, a cultural asset and significant staple in Hawaii. On the other hand, a large agribusiness, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar, needs an ongoing water source for its survival. Without water, this sugar company that employs more than 800 Maui residents will be shut down, further exacerbating the unemployment picture and damaging Maui's economy.

The State Commission on Water Resources is tasked with making the difficult decision about water allocation. There will be questions about equity and economics. However, for the ILWU, the bottom line is jobs and the economy. 2010 is not the time to be allowing hundreds of jobs to be lost. The economy is fragile enough as it is.

In addition to the jobs, closure of HC&S, which is a decidedly likely scenario if water is not available for production, will mean loss of hundreds of acres of lush, green fields. Maui residents recall what the landscape in Lahaina looked like when Pioneer Mill shut down. The arid environment in Lahaina caused fields to quickly dry up and become dusty reminders of lost jobs and economic activity. Just imagine what visitors to Maui will see if HC&S were to close.

The working group proposed under H.R. 119 / H.C.R. 184 will have a number of issues to consider, one of which will be to ensure that the policies and practices of state and county agencies will enable and promote the availability of water for agricultural production and the maintenance of agricultural systems. In their work, we trust that the working group and the agencies will seriously consider the economic and human impact of water allocation decisions.

The ILWU urges adoption of H.R. 119 / H.C.R. 184. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: Sent: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Sunday, March 28, 2010 11:34 AM

To:

**AGRtestimony** 

Cc:

hvtaro@hawaiiantel.net

Subject:

Testimony for HCR184 on 3/29/2010 10:30:00 AM

Testimony for AGR/WLO 3/29/2010 10:30:00 AM HCR184

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Rodney Haraguchi

Organization: Kauai Taro Growers Association Address: P. O. Box 427 Hanalei, Hi 96714-0427

Phone: 808-826-6202

E-mail: hvtaro@hawaiiantel.net

Submitted on: 3/28/2010

Comments:

Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Water, Land and Ocean Resources:

The members of the Kauai Taro Growers Association (KTGA) represent 80-90% of the taro acreage here on Kauai which totals approximately 250 acres. And Kauai supplies 80.9% of the total taro production in the state of Hawaii based on the 2008 statistics from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Hanalei Valley taro farmers represent 60% of the Kauai production.

We support HCR No. 184 that will allow farmers to voice their concerns regarding the security for quantities of water and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure that are essential to support taro production on a scale necessary to meet the objectives of the biosecurity program.

At this time the #1 request for the Hanalei Valley taro farmers is the repair of their intake. This in-take has been in need of repair for the past 15 years due to a small break that has now expanded to a length of 80 feet and the entire 8 feet high bank has eroded away. This past November the major flood diverted 100% of their water and the entire Hanalei Valley taro fields were without water. The taro farmers only have a temporary repair and the next flood will again divert their water from their fields.

With the tight budget and economy, we need to prioritize the needs and water is the lifeline and blood for the taro farmers. We ask for your assistance for this repair to keep the taro growing in the Hanalei Valley.



From: Sent: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Sunday, March 28, 2010 1:24 PM

To:

AGRtestimony

Cc:

hvtaro@hawaiiantel.net

Subject:

Testimony for HR119 on 3/29/2010 10:30:00 AM

Testimony for AGR/WLO 3/29/2010 10:30:00 AM HR119

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Rodney Haraguchi

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With the tight budget and economy, we need to prioritize the needs and water is the lifeline and blood for the taro farmers. We ask for your assistance for this repair to keep the taro growing in the Hanalei Valley.





Group Seeking Understanding 75 Kawehi Place Kula Hawaii 96790

RE: HR 119 Requesting that the legislature convene an investigatory public hearing to evaluate the biosecurity program by examining state and county policies and practices that affect the availability of water for agriculture and maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems.

Chair Ito, Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committees

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HR 119. My name is Kelly Ruidas, employee of Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar on the island of Maui for the past 12 years. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Hui O Ka 'Ike, an HC&S workforce volunteer group whose mission is to heighten awareness of the critical role HC&S plays in Maui's community.

The following are a number of the significant benefits that HC&S provides for Maui.

1. Employs roughly 800 full-time jobs for Maui residents.

2. Annually HC&S adds approximately \$100 million into Maui's economy by doing business with many local vendors on Maui and throughout this state. Another \$47 million is paid in wages and benefits to its employees and retirees.

3. Offers one of the largest apprenticeship programs in Hawaii with a wide range of opportunities to choose from: carpenter, plumber, welder, machinist,

electrician, mechanic, power plant operator, etc.

4. Adds diversity to the economy by having agriculture in place. This is made abundantly clear when seeing the low occupancy rates in the hotel industry and the many workers on the bench in the construction field.

5. Generates renewable energy via hydroelectric and biomass, which is then transmitted to MECO (Maui Electric Company). Seven percent of MECO's total

power deliveries are supplied by HC&S.

 Aesthetically, HC&S's sugar cane keeps Maui green and is one of the main impressions when viewing central Maui from the plane, whether leaving or arriving.

Some of these benefiting factors that I have briefly described for you are just a few positive contributions that Maui residents have enjoyed for generations simply by HC&S being in business.

However, the future of our company and a lifestyle that this island has known for over a century are being threatened by two key decisions.

The State CWRM (Commission on Water Resource Management) is poised to take action by setting the IIFS (Interim Instream Flow Standards) for the East and West Maui Streams. The IIFS is the amount of water that must be left in the streams before water can be used for off stream purposes. Off stream users include ranchers, farmers, and the County of Maui. In essence, the scope of the State CWRM's decision stretches far beyond HC&S and has the potential to negatively impact (economically) Maui's community should the setting of the IIFS be too low for stream users.

# Hui O Ka'lke

Group Seeking Understanding 75 Kawehi Place Kula Hawaii 96790

HC&S is not just another sugar plantation. If it was, it would have closed its doors a long time ago like many other plantations throughout the state. HC&S has provided employment for several generations in many families. For these families, whose roots run deep in this plantation, HC&S is not just a company but part of their extended family. My fellow workers and I can see the numerous possibilities this company has to offer. We look forward to seeing HC&S fulfill its potential. HC&S already has the land and infrastructure in place to sustain Maui with food crops should a pandemic or shipping crisis arise. In addition, our company is seriously looking at our sugar cane as an energy crop.

In closing, HC&S has given to Maui in the past and continues to do so today. This is an extremely pivotal point in time for Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar. Our company has the opportunity to continue to provide for Maui's community as it did in centuries past. This can only be realized through the strong public support that we have been receiving and, of course, water. Water is the core of HC&S's future and the determining factor for us to remain viable. This is the very reason that I respectfully ask for your support of HR 119.

On behalf of Hui O Ka 'Ike, I would like to thank you for your time and consideration.

If there are any comments or questions, I can be contacted at (808) 264-0739.

KELLY RUIDAS
Internal Combustion Engine Mechanic
Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company

RE: HR 119 requesting that the legislature convene an investigatory public hearing to evaluate the biosecurity program by examining state and county policies and practices that affect the availability of water for agriculture and maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems

We the undersigned, **STRONGLY support** this resolution. To have agriculture, you must have water. There have been numerous droughts throughout the State. On Maui, we have had 2 consecutive years of drought in 2007 and 2008 that has hurt agriculture significantly.

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Antonio Bran	Kahului	96732
Marvin Murao	129 Halimaile Rd.	96768
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