



LATE TESTIMONY

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March 17, 2011

Testimony
RE: SB14 SD2 Relating To Agricultural Development

Chair Tsuji, Chair Chang and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations across the State, strongly supports SB14SD2, expanding the use of the Agriculture Development and Food Security Special Fund.

The Ag Development and Food Security Special Fund was created to accelerate the renovation and development of agricultural infrastructure across the State. Currently we have a situation in which existing infrastructure is at risk. Safety certification requirements that were not on our radar screen at the time of enactment of this fund are now threatening the existence of many agricultural water storage facilities.

Extensive engineering studies followed by corrective actions are placing extreme economic burdens on our farmers and ranchers. They all want to do the right thing. Safety is of utmost concern. At the same time, it is not the intent of the Dam And Reservoir safety law to put farmers and ranchers out of business as they try to comply with the measure. This bill provides a mechanism to leverage private spending with assistance using fund resources. Testimonies will be received by this body from farms and ranches across the State providing unique examples of impacts of this measure.

We respectfully request your assistance in passing this measure to protect our critical agricultural water infrastructure while complying with safety requirements. Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter. If there are questions, please contact Warren Watanabe, Executive Director of MCFB at 2819718.

LATE TESTIMONY



Via Capitol Website

March 17, 2011

House Committee on Agriculture and Water, Land & Ocean Resources
Hearing Date: Friday, March 18, 2011
Room #325

**Testimony in Support of SB 14 SD2—
Relating to Agricultural Development**

Chair Tsuji, Chair Chang, and Members of the House Committees on Agriculture and Water, Land & Ocean Resources:

My name is Michael Tresler, and I am the Senior Vice President of Grove Farm Company, Inc. Grove Farm owns approximately 40,000 acres of land on Kauai, making us one of Kauai's largest private landowners. We focus on agricultural, economic, and community development. A vast majority of our lands are leased out for diversified agriculture and ranching.

Grove Farm appreciates this opportunity to testify and is **in strong support** of SB 14 SD2, which expands the authorized uses of the agricultural development and food security special fund to include the improvement and investigative studies of dams and reservoirs, while also authorizes the Director of Finance to issue general obligation bonds for the special fund.

Grove Farm's Position. We are responsible for numerous reservoirs and irrigation ditch systems on our property which are critical not only to our agricultural needs, but to the neighboring agricultural community as well. In addition to its critical role to support agriculture, our reservoirs and irrigation ditch systems provide a viable source of drinking water. We developed a surface water treatment plant in conjunction with the County of Kauai's Department of Water at the Kapaia Reservoir. It currently provides up to 3,000,000 gallons per day of drinking water and is capable of being expanded to provide several more millions of gallons. The use of surface water is necessary as the water aquifers in the area continue to diminish. In addition, the reservoirs itself hold the surface water and allow it to percolate into the ground and recharge the aquifers.

Many of the reservoirs and irrigation ditch systems have been in operation for over 100 years and require consistent maintenance and upkeep. While we have always made maintenance of our reservoirs a priority, the rising cost to comply with the Dam and Reservoir Safety Act, makes it extremely difficult to continue operating the reservoirs. The financial impact makes decommissioning the reservoirs a real consideration. Expanding the use of the Agricultural Development and Food Security Special Fund to include investigative studies and capital improvements will greatly aid the continued operation and maintenance of dams and reservoirs.

Grove Farm is in **strong support** to SB 14 HD 2.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this matter.

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