

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



STATE TESTIMONY

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2011
9:30 a.m.
Room 312

SENATE BILL NO. 631, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1 RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 631, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1. The Department of Agriculture recognizes that achieving energy security along with food security are priorities of the Abercrombie Administration. We support efforts to achieve both energy and food security in a manner that is complementary to existing law to the greatest extent possible.

The Department of Agriculture has concerns with this measure as amended, particularly with allowing solar as a permissible use on "B" rated agricultural land and on designated Important Agricultural Lands (IAL) if the solar facilities are determined to be an accessory use to an agricultural-energy facility. Our understanding of Chapter 205 is that the primary use of agricultural land is for agricultural production. Section 205-2(a)(3) establishes the boundaries of the Agricultural District with the provision that "...the greatest possible protection shall be given to those lands with a high capacity for intensive cultivation." Section 205-4.5(a), further restricts the use of agricultural lands with "A" and "B" rated soils. While Chapter 205 also lists energy-related permissible uses including wind energy facilities, biofuel processing facilities, and agricultural-energy facilities, we point out that each of these energy-related permissible uses is



required to have a meaningful connection to agriculture, compatibility with agricultural uses, or does not adversely affect agricultural land and activities. Therefore, the Department fully supports the provisions in HRS 205-4.5(a) and HRS 205-2(a)(3).

We note that Act 231 (SLH 2008) that established solar energy facilities as a permissible use within the Agricultural District, purposefully limited this use for "marginal agricultural lands" with Land Study Bureau "D" and "E" ratings to avoid use of the higher productivity rated agricultural lands. The Department would not oppose the amendment that would permit solar energy facilities on "C" rated agricultural land with an acreage limitation.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to present testimony on this bill.



LATE TESTIMONY
**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

RICHARD C. LIM
DIRECTOR

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Statement of
RICHARD C. LIM
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE**

Friday, April 01, 2011
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

in consideration of
SB 631 SD1, HD1
RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB631 SD1, HD1. The bill expands the permitted use of renewable energy on agricultural land. Expanding the permitted use of renewable energy on agricultural land helps to ensure we will reach the renewable portfolio standard target of 40 percent renewable generation by 2030.

This version of the bill includes limits on the amount of solar energy facilities allowed on lands rated "B" and "C" as well as prohibits the installation of solar energy facilities in areas designated as Important Agricultural Lands. Therefore, it provides a balanced approach to preserving the most important agricultural lands while enabling the placement of solar energy facilities in some agricultural lands to meet local energy needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

LATE TESTIMONY

Statement of
Aisha TK Kadomatsu
before the
AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
Friday, April 1, 2011
9:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312
in consideration of
SB631 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY.

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashmen and Members of the Committees:

I give qualified support to SB631 SD1 HD1. I appreciate the efforts of the House to improve this bill since crossover by putting restrictions on use of our best agricultural land for solar electric production. In the state of Hawaii, we have a total 418,701 acres of B and C land. It is best that we use this valuable land for agricultural purposes because lands that go out of farming will never get put back into agricultural production.

Protecting agriculture land has been the number 1 concern in the 1960 Constitution. Unfortunately, we have failed to resolve this problem. We have lost 50% of our prime farm land in the last 50 years. We have to start moving in a different direction in order to save our agricultural land.

Please be sure to retain the restriction to scale and appurtenance for solar electrical generation on B & C ag land.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on an important issue,

Aisha Kadomatsu, Waialae Nui, Honolulu, Hawaii

LATE TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 8:16 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc:
Subject: testimony for SB631 on 4/1/2011 9:30:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 4/1/2011 9:30:00 AM SB631

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Alice Liggett
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: _____
Submitted on: 3/31/2011

Comments: