



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

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FEBRUARY 24, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2362, SD1
RELATING TO IRRIGATION

Room 211
9:00 AM

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison for the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF strongly supports SB 2362, SD1 appropriating funds for irrigation systems across the State. This measure is one of HFBF's priority measures and part of a systematic effort to increase access to water by our farmers and ranchers.

Many of these irrigation systems are old and some have been in disuse for a period of time. The repair and maintenance of these systems is critical because our farmers and ranchers depend on these irrigation systems for their operations. Water is a basic necessity for farmers and ranchers to maintain and expand their production. The reliability of water is a key factor for our farmers and ranchers when decided to expand their operations.

Several systems have been included in this measure. The funds are directed to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Resource Management Division. We will defer to them for final numbers of what is needed for the systems at this time.

We respectfully request your strong support of this measure.

I can be reached at (808) 848-2074 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Molokai Farm Bureau



An Affiliate of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

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Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Molokai Farm Bureau Strongly supports SB 2362, SD1 and the appropriation of funds for the various irrigation systems identified in this bill. Each system represents the most critical juncture in Agriculture – the fundamental ability to have reliable access to water, and its continued flow. Many systems stand in serious need of repair and maintenance, as the system’s users have consistently expressed.

For Molokai specifically, our Molokai Irrigation System (also known as the MIS) is in need of significant repair to simply achieve its meant capacity, and this resultant loss of needed revenue as well as reduced acres planted, is a valid concern. The inability of the only agricultural water source on Molokai to use its actual capacity, is an earnest reason to not only assess, but fund its much needed repairs.

Moreover, there is potential to increase Ag production on Molokai by further developing the MIS. If improvements can be made to support increased acreage, Molokai could increase employment in the Agricultural sector as well as create additional revenue for the system itself, which could be used for maintenance and/or improvements making the MIS less dependent on State funding. But none of this can be accomplished until we address the basic needed repairs.

To be sustainable, Agriculture needs responsible foresight and cooperative partnerships from all sectors. We have confidence in the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Resource Management Division to assess the final figures that will be needed to accomplish this.

We humbly ask that you support SB 2362, SD1.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: warrenmcfb@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2362 on 2/24/2012 9:00:00 AM
Date: Thursday, February 23, 2012 12:36:45 PM

Testimony for WAM 2/24/2012 9:00:00 AM SB2362

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Warren Watanabe
Organization: MCFB
E-mail: warrenmcfb@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2012

Comments: