

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER

CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE**

**FEBRUARY 2, 2022
3:00 P.M.**

CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SENATE BILL NO. 2287
RELATING TO THE NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY**

Chairpersons Wakai and Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2287. The bill clarifies that the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority's (NELHA) duties include supporting aquaculture. The Department supports this bill.

While NELHA currently manages aquaculture tenants and supports aquaculture industry development, this policy could change depending on economic or political shifts. The proposed language would create an explicit relationship with aquaculture and signal to the industry that NELHA will continue to support aquaculture into the future.

As such, the Department supports this measure.





NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY



An Authority of the State of Hawaii attached to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

Statement of
Gregory P. Barbour
Executive Director
Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority
before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
and the
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, February 2, 2022
3:00 pm
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

in consideration of

**SB 2287
RELATING TO THE NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY.**

The Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA) is pleased to offer comments on SB 2287 which amends Section 227D-2 Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) by adding specific language regarding the support of research, development, and commercialization of aquaculture. NELHA appreciates the intent of this language, however we believe that this measure is unnecessary.

After our review, of previous legislation and current statutes in Section 227-D HRS that relate to NELHA we believe the current statutes serve their purpose. Legislation related to the creation of NELHA provides broad powers for the development of “natural resources” and specifically “ocean waters”. We believe that given the numerous references to “natural resources” was intended to avoid “hamstringing” and give maximum flexibility to the NELHA

Board of Directors in development of the resources found at our current site in Kona such as 1) a climate optimal for sea water aquaculture due to the high solar insolation, 2) pristine nutrient rich ocean water; and 3) ocean temperature differential due to the close proximity of deep-ocean water.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



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FEBRUARY 2, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2287
RELATING TO THE NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Misalucha and Nishihara, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB 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 interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 2287, which clarifies that the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority's duties include supporting aquaculture.

Hawaii's aquaculture industry farm gate value is \$74,000,000, the fifth-highest contribution to the economy in diversified agriculture. Hawaii's favorable climate and geography allow for inherent advantages benefitting aquaculture production.

The Legislature acknowledged the importance of Hawaii's aquaculture industry by revitalizing the Aquaculture Development Program through Act 63, SLH 2019. However, more investment and research into the aquaculture industry is needed, including investment and research into different types of aquaculture, aquaculture system optimization, economic implications of various methods of aquaculture production.

NELHA is an exceptional facility that features an ideal climate, access to cold deep-ocean water and warm surface water, and the opportunity to interact with experts in aquaculture biology, engineering, and finance. Successful NELHA businesses will help to grow Hawaii's aquaculture industry, bringing in investment, producing high-quality seafood, and increasing employment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.