

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022
1:00 P.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2615
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2615 which establishes two positions on the Board of Agriculture ("Board") and specifies one shall be a resident of the island of Moloka'i and one shall be a resident of the island of Lana'i. The department supports the intent of the measure provided it does not adversely impact the Department's priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

It appears that this measure seeks to ensure representation of the of the Moloka'i and Lana'i agricultural communities on the Board by establishing positions that are geographically based. The Board was established with members from each of the four Counties to address that concern from its inception. Historically, the Board member representing Maui County has represented the interests of the entire county, including Moloka'i and Lana'i. Additionally, a member in one of the at-large positions on the board at this time is very knowledgeable of controlled environment agriculture on Lana'i which is an example of agricultural technology and innovation at its highest level in Hawai'i. The same member also has a diverse experience of agricultural production and food systems on the Island of Hawai'i. Currently any person as a resident of Moloka'i or Lana'i can also apply to be considered and nominated as an at-large member of the Board of Agriculture.

Within the department there is an exclusive opportunity for residents of Moloka'i to have a voice and decision-making vote as a member of the Moloka'i Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board for the Moloka'i irrigation system water service. It has been a challenge for the department to fill vacant advisory board positions with Moloka'i residents. The department recently completed the 2020 Update to the Hawai'i



Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline that reported a significant increase in diversified crop acreage on Lana`i. In 2021, Moloka`i experienced specific challenges to animal disease and climate change. Adding two members of to the board of agriculture to represent Moloka`i and Lana`i provides the desired diversity in statewide representation of knowledge and perspectives for providing broad operating policies for the department.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Monday January 31 2022, 1:00 P.M.
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
SB 2615 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

Pūlama Lānaʻi is a land and resource management company, a cultural steward, and a community builder. Today, Lānaʻi is being redefined as a sustainable community. Pūlama Lānaʻi is helping to shape the future of our island by creating new opportunities driven by agriculture, resource management, conservation and more. We strive to enhance and perpetuate the island's diverse species and fragile ecosystem through game management, natural species preservation, watershed management, erosion control, coastal resources and fisheries management, invasive species control and conservation education. Pūlama Lānaʻi brings an integrated and comprehensive approach to protect and manage Lānaʻi's natural resources. Bound by a strong sense of community, we are committed to building infrastructure and expanding essential services to improve the lives of Lānaʻi residents.

Pūlama Lānaʻi is in **support of SB 2615**, which amends the current statute to establish a Board seat on the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Agriculture for the islands of Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi. Each island community has its own unique biocultural landscape, which recognizes the pervasive interactions between biological and cultural phenomena. As such, having a broad representation from each island will provide each island to have a voice at the table when establishing operating policies for the Department of Agriculture, which is dedicated to the preservation and productive use of agricultural resources so as to assure a healthy and adequate food supply for Hawaiʻi's people, providing employment, maintaining a favorable balance of trade, and preserving the aesthetic quality of the Hawaiʻi.

As an asset manager for the ownership company, Pūlama Lānaʻi is very interested in the policies that will govern agricultural resources on Lānaʻi. Pūlama Lānaʻi constructed a hydroponic operation on Lānaʻi called Sensei Farms in 2020 and began exporting fresh produce to the residents and businesses as well as to the neighbor island market in the same year. Sensei Farms grows assorted greens and vine-grown vegetables more sustainably indoors with greater yields and a minimal footprint. The six greenhouses in production are powered by an off-grid solar and battery facility, further decreasing our agricultural operations dependence on fossil fuel and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. As we move forward to building a more sustainable future, policies that affect our island matter being part of the decision making process is vital.

We respectfully request that you favorably vote to move SB 2615 forward for consideration.

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 7:26:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gene Ross K. Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please Support SB2615

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 9:18:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rosie F Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support bill SB2615, for Molokai and Lanai

mahalo

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 8:24:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Iolani Kuoha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom it may concern,

I support SB2615, as a wife of a farmer, a community member of Moloka‘i, it is important to amend the composition of the Board of Agriculture by allowing and providing representation from the Island of Moloka‘i and Lāna‘i.

Mahalo

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/29/2022 1:48:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Winona Kaawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a Hawaiian Homesteader, I support the appointment of a Molokai resident to the Board of Agriculture.

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/30/2022 10:20:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Claire Kamalu Carroll	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair Mike Gabbord and Committee Members.

I am submitting my support of SB2615. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to our people of Hawaii.

Mahalo nui,

Claire Kamalu Carroll

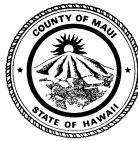
Resident of Hana Maui

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

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Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Gabe Johnson
Kelly Takaya King
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
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January 30, 2022

TO: Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee", is written over the printed name and title.

DATE: January 30, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 2615, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to change the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai. The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Each of the islands of the State has different water resources, and therefore unique agricultural issues.
2. Amending the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai better addresses the complex needs of each island's agricultural community.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.

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SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/30/2022 2:57:33 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Bronson Azama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is long overdue and our communities deserve not just representation by population, but we should provide equitable representation as well, through other means outside of the elections.

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/30/2022 3:47:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Russell DeCoite	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha My name is Russell DeCoite and I am a third generation farmer and rancher on the Island of Molokai. I am in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2615. Molokai is unique and our issues differ from other islands. What works for Maui might not necessarily work for Molokai and vice a versa. Many of our issues have not been addressed because it has been represented by Maui on the Board of Agriculture. If we are to move Molokai in the right direction of farming, i humbly ask that you let us have a voice on the Board of Agriculture. For these reasons I SUPPORT SB2615.

Mahalo,

Russell DeCoite

Farmer and Rancher on Molokai

SB-2615

Submitted on: 1/31/2022 7:58:56 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Faith Tuipulotu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Representation from Molokai and Lanai is a must!