

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SHARON HURD  
Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**LATE**

**WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY**  
**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS  
AND ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026**  
**10:15 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 180 / HOUSE RESOLUTION 170  
USING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO EXPLORE  
AND PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO COLOCATE COMMUNITY-BASED  
RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATING PROJECTS WITH AGRICULTURAL  
RESERVOIRS AND IRRIGATION WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.**

Chairs Chun and Lowen, Vice Chairs Kusch and Perruso, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution 180 / House Resolution 170.0 This resolution urges the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) to explore and pursue opportunities to collocate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure. The Department respectfully offers comments.

The Department recognizes the potential benefits of renewable energy generating projects and supports efforts to move towards food and energy independence. Decisions regarding state resources should also account for costs, impacts on existing infrastructure and its functionality, long-term maintenance and operational requirements, and compliance with public procurement standards. The Department looks forward to participating in such opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 5:59:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brian Miyamoto	Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	In Person

Comments:

Farm Strong



April 7, 2026

Attention:

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

Written Testimony in Support of HCR 180/HR 170 “Urging the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to co-locate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure”

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Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection,

Since 2021, the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (“MCEH”), which includes Molokai residents, community leaders, practitioners, experts, and island organizations, developed the Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan (CERAP). With support from technical and industry advisors and policy experts, CERAP’s innovative community planning process has been supported by the Hawai’i Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO), Hawaii State Energy Office (HSEO), Hawaii Natural Energy Initiative (HNEI), Maui County, Molokai’s elected officials, and others in the energy sector.

One of CERAP’s ten priority community identified projects is Floating Photovoltaics (FPV) at Kualapu’u Reservoir. MCEH has \$1.4M of federal funding from the Department of Energy, which expires in mid-September 2026 to progress FPV feasibility studies. HCR180/HR170 strongly supports the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity’s collaboration with these studies, including providing short-term access to the reservoir. Access is needed to perform hydrological, boundary and other surveys to progress FPV to a 30% engineering design.

MCEH is open to sharing survey results with other agencies and stakeholders, and Kualapu’u could be a pilot project under HCR/180/HR170 at no cost to the State.



MCEH recognizes energy as a resource with multi-tiered benefits that prioritizes Molokai community values and community voices first while respectfully managing water, land, and food security with energy solutions. The intersection of these resources and industries are crucial to Molokai as the community looks to achieve 100% clean, renewable energy and who also understands the importance of food security and sovereignty, and respectful management of water, all which supports day-to-day life on Molokai and in times of disasters.

As the state of Hawai'i, including specifically Molokai experiences the following energy impacts:

- Electric rates for residential customers: Molokai residents face some of the highest in the state at more than 50¢/kwh pre-Iran war
- Post- Iran war gas prices on Molokai are over \$7/gallon
- Higher costs for water and/or agricultural owners: Water facilities can spend an estimated 20–40% of their operating budgets just on electricity for pumping while high water-energy costs make it increasingly difficult for local farmers to survive

HCR 180/HR 170 will support all priorities of Molokai community identified projects in CERAP, including Floating Photovoltaics (FPV) at Kualapu'u Reservoir:

Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for agriculture use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources, and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
- Due to the design characteristics of FPV, 7MW can be produced with PV on 15 acres of the reservoir's surface area (only 17.3% of total reservoir surface area) vs 36 acres if the same sized solar system was land based.

Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

- The solar generated from panels on the reservoir, especially if community-owned, could provide a significant portion (~50%) of the island's electricity needs at a stable cost.



MCEH has been leading energy work on Molokai for the last 6 years and recognizes that energy intersects all things, including water and food systems directly managed by local farmers. We are open to amendments to this HCR 180/HR 170 that centers on community voices and decision making throughout the project.

For these reasons MCEH is in strong support of HCR 180/HR 170 and we urge the House Committee on Agriculture and Food System and House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection to support HCR 180/HR 170.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph K. Yelina".

Energy Director, Sust'ainable Molokai  
Molokai Clean Energy Hui



April 7, 2026

Attention:

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

Written Testimony in Support of HCR 180/HR 170 “Urging the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to co-locate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure”

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MCEH has been leading energy work on Molokai for the last 6 years and recognizes that energy intersects all things, including water and food systems directly managed by local farmers. We are open to amendments to this HCR 180/HR 170 that centers on community voices and decision making throughout the project.

For these reasons MCEH is in strong support of HCR 180/HR 170 and we urge the House Committee on Agriculture and Food System and House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection to support HCR 180/HR 170.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph K. Yulian".

Energy Director, Sust'ainable Molokai  
Molokai Clean Energy Hui



**E OLA KA HAWAII!**

*Mission: To help Ho'olehua Homesteaders grow  
revitalizing its food systems,  
maintaining a subsistence lifestyle,  
and increasing long-term economic health*

**LATE**

**HO'OLEHUA**  
*Homesteaders Association*

**hoolehuahomesteaders@gmail.com**

**P. O. Box 60 | Ho'olehua | Molokai | Hawaii | 96729-0060**

April 6, 2026

To: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

From: Ho'olehua Homesteaders Association

Re: HCR 180 & HR 170

Ho'olehua Homesteaders Association is proud to support this resolution to urge the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to co-locate community-based renewable energy generating projects with Agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure. More specifically, we support the continued exploration of the Floating PV project at the Kualapu'u Reservoir designed by the community. Members of our association participated in providing input to the Molokai CERAP recent feasibility study and appreciate the opportunity to be included with projects for our Molokai island community.

We believe that through community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, we can achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. Our community has gained nationwide recognition for the unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project. We ask that you consider engaging with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Sincerely,

Charles A Kaahanui, III  
President

*Charles A. Ka'ahanui, III, President (Policy)*

*Tricia Mersberg, Vice President (Health & Wellness, Social Media)*

*Crissy Pereira, Secretary (Veterans, Website)*

*Lu Ann Faborito, Treasurer (Fundraising)*

*Louella 'Opu'ulani Albino, Barbara Kalipi, Helen O'Connor, Kammie Purdy - Kupuna Council*

*Fred Aki, Director (Energy)*

*Justin Avelino, Director (Education)*

*Wayne Ka'auwai, Director (Water)*

**LATE**

April 7, 2026

To: Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems  
Chair Lowen, Vice Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HR170 / HCR180 “Urging the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to co-locate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure”

Aloha pumehana e nā Committees on Agriculture and Food Systems, and Energy and Environmental Protection,

Mahalo for the opportunity to write this **testimony of STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT for HR170 / HCR 180**. My name is Leilani Chow and I have had the honor of serving my Molokai community in the areas of energy efficiency and community-led energy planning for the past 16 years. Through my work in household energy audits, light bulb and appliance exchanges, coordination support for the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (“Hui” est. 2020), lead community facilitator for the Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan (“CERAP” est. 2021), and in my current role as Ho‘āhu Energy Cooperative Molokai’s Projects Coordinator, the Molokai community has trusted me to responsibly document and advocate for their needs and preferences when it comes to Molokai’s clean energy future.

The following community data and major decision points collected throughout the 5 year long CERAP planning process have been compiled here to exemplify the incredible dedication, time, and serious consideration Molokai has put into the selection and exploration of floating solar thus far. All CERAP projects, including FPV, have only made it to this point if they've received strong island-wide support. Projects are only able to receive strong community support through the CERAP process, designed by and for Molokai to prioritize well-informed place-based decision making.

#### **CERAP 1.0 (Jan 2022 - June 2023)**

- With support from HECO and the PUC, the Hui and UH Mānoa’s Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) TA led by Mark Glick present a series of island-wide energy briefings on generation, storage, and grid configuration options that are technically feasible for Molokai.
- The Molokai Community identifies Floating Solar as a generation technology in alignment with our values and goals that we would like to explore further.
- Hui/community and HNEI work together to understand appropriate siting and sizing consideration alongside high-level cost tradeoffs for floating solar at the Kualapu‘u Reservoir.
- CERAP’s FPV and other project concepts are shared island-wide, **floating solar at the Kualapu‘u Reservoir receives 100% community support and makes it to the final CERAP portfolio** of projects after:
  - 2,800+ individual community conversations
  - 713 surveys collected
  - 30+ focus groups and workshops
  - 17 community events

### CERAP 2.1 (Jan 2024 - June 2025)

- The Hui receives Technical Assistance from Dept of Energy's National Laboratory of the Rockies (NRL) and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) and continues working with HECO to understand grid preferability for Molokai.
- **FPV is validated from a technical grid preferability standpoint**, across Molokai community members compare high level project costs and bill impacts for different sizes and configurations of floating solar and ground-mounted solar.
- **Despite higher costs than ground-mounted solar, FPV continues to receive strong community support** and rises to the top 2 most preferred options for generating Central Molokai's energy (about 50% of Molokai's energy needs). This was confirmed through:
  - 512 community surveys
  - 10 focus groups and workshops
  - 19 community events

### CERAP 2.2 (July 2025 - Sept 2026)

- The Hui/community uses part of the remaining DOE funding to contract Noria Energy who quantifies and **confirms water related benefits and considerations for an FPV project** at the Kualapu'u Reservoir.
- Updated project costs, physical design layout, landowner relationship, water protection, environment/wildlife impacts, construction impacts, and timeline attributes for Molokai's top projects are shared with the community **from Jan-March 2026**.
- **The Community reaffirms FPV is a top priority energy project to move forward with** through:
  - 170 surveys collected
  - 11+ individual, focus group, and workshop discussions
  - 4+ community events
- (NOW) April - September 2026 the Molokai community has \$1.4 million remaining from DOE and is **seeking Department of Ag and Biosecurity permission for Right of Entry ASAP** to continue exploring the feasibility of floating solar at Kualapu'u.

After five years of rigorous planning and thousands of community conversations, Molokai has remained consistent in our prioritization of FPV as an energy solution that supports on island agriculture, protects our water, and improves our overall sustainability and wellbeing. We have the technical validation, community support, and \$1.4 million in federal funding ready to be deployed before it expires in September 2026.

**We humbly ask for your support of HR170 / HCR180 to provide the Dept of Ag and Biosecurity the encouragement and legislative backing needed to partner with the Molokai Clean Energy Hui in this exploration.**

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

*Leilani Chow*

Projects Coordinator, Ho'āhu Energy Cooperative Molokai  
Molokai Clean Energy Hui

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 3:08:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 4:23:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Coombs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, esteemed members of the legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for the House Concurrent Resolution urging the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to colocate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure throughout the State of Hawaii.

Hawaii stands at a crucial juncture in its energy landscape, and the commitment to achieving one hundred percent renewable electricity by 2045 is not merely a goal; it is a necessity for our sustainability and resilience. The integration of renewable energy sources with our existing agricultural infrastructure represents a significant opportunity to enhance our energy security while supporting our vital agricultural sector.

**Our agricultural reservoirs and irrigation systems are important assets that should be able to effectively support renewable energy technologies. By colocating floating solar photovoltaic systems and gravity-powered water energy generation technologies, we should be able to harness the natural synergy between water management and energy production.**

The benefits of such integration extend beyond energy generation. By reducing water evaporation from reservoirs and minimizing algae growth, we can maintain overall water quality and improve system efficiency. This is vital for preserving our precious water resources and maintaining the health of our ecosystems.

I urge the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to take proactive steps in collaborating with farmers, community organizations, and relevant stakeholders to identify suitable sites for these projects. Supporting feasibility studies and pilot projects will be crucial in evaluating the technical, economic, and environmental potential of integrating renewable energy systems with our agricultural water infrastructure.

I also want to voice my opinion that any energy solutions should be mutually beneficial to the community and also to the reservoir/water system and its users. There are substantial costs that are associated with running a water

delivery system, and those costs should be recouperated at least in part through the renewable energy project.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support this resolution and encourage you to take decisive action to promote the integration of renewable energy with our agricultural infrastructure.

Mahalo for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jill Coombs  
Molokai Ag Park Tenant  
808-658-9849  
jill.coombs@yahoo.com

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 5:04:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HCR 180 and HR170. Our water resources are a potentially extremely valuable source of energy generation and energy storage that have been neglected for way too long.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:39:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

180 HCR URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO EXPLORE AND PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO COLOCATE COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATING PROJECTS WITH AGRICULTURAL RESERVOIRS AND IRRIGATION WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 5:54:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

strong support to help our residence and homesteaders on Molokai with more energy efficient resources

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 5:16:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kenneth Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

strong support

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:30:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Liliana Napoleon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Liliana Napoleon , and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a resident of Molokai, I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) and want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project in order to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir outlined below.

Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for ag use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources, and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
- Due to the design characteristics of FPV, 7MW can be produced with PV on 15 acres of the reservoir's surface area (only 17.3% of total reservoir surface area) vs 36 acres if the same sized solar system was land based.

Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

- The solar generated from panels on the reservoir, especially if community-owned, could provide a significant portion (~50%) of the island's electricity needs at a stable cost.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. We are committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders to achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. Our community has gained nationwide recognition for our unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project.

We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:31:23 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nani Kahinu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO EXPLORE AND PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO COLOCATE COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATING PROJECTS WITH AGRICULTURAL RESERVOIRS AND IRRIGATION WATER INFRASTRUCTURE"

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:36:56 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dexter Walcott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Dexter Walcott, and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As an architect and resident of Molokai I am urging the committee to continue to work with the community to explore electricity generation co-location with AG reservoirs. In this time of unprecedented uncertainty and exorbitant energy costs it is critical for the state to embrace innovative and community-driven solutions to energy independence for Molokai.

I ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the Molokai Clean Energy Hui and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:37:00 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Karen Poepoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HCR 180. Moloka'i residents, paying some of the highest electric bills in the country, are very interested in having renewable energy options. Community request to Dept of Ag. Mahalo.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:53:13 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawaipuna Kalipi	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

Mahalo to Representative Poepoe for introducing this resolution. It is through her boots-on-the-ground presence in the community, and her responsiveness to the voices and values of Moloka‘i, that we have this opportunity to share how Moloka‘i aims to transition to 100% renewable energy in alignment with community, aloha ‘āina, and long-term stewardship values.

My name is [NAME], and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170 / HCR 180, urging the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to explore and pursue opportunities to colocate community-based renewable energy generating projects with agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure.

As a resident of Moloka‘i, I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process through the Moloka‘i Community Energy Resilience Action Plan (CERAP), facilitated by the Moloka‘i Clean Energy Hui (MCEH). I respectfully encourage the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to support the continued exploration of the community-designed Floating Photovoltaic (FPV) project at Kualapu‘u Reservoir.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity’s collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. Our community remains committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts, agencies, and stakeholders, to achieve energy resilience for Moloka‘i in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way possible.

Moloka‘i has gained national recognition for its unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project. This effort reflects our island’s commitment to solutions that honor both our people and our place.

We respectfully ask that you pass HR 170 / HCR 180 and strongly support the Department’s collaboration with the Moloka‘i Clean Energy Hui and the Moloka‘i community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to strengthen both Moloka‘i’s energy future and its agricultural systems.

This is an opportunity not only for Moloka‘i, but for the entire State of Hawai‘i. If Moloka‘i is successful in advancing this project, it has the potential to transform how we think about the relationship between energy generation and water infrastructure. Let Moloka‘i pilot this project. It is community-supported, and we are prepared to move forward thoughtfully and adapt as needed.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 170 / HCR 180**

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Paul Hanley, and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a resident of Molokai, I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) and want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project in order to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir outlined below.

### Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for ag use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources, and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

### Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
- Due to the design characteristics of FPV, 7MW can be produced with PV on 15 acres of the reservoir's surface area (only 17.3% of total reservoir surface area) vs 36 acres if the same sized solar system was land based.

### Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

- The solar generated from panels on the reservoir, especially if community-owned, could provide a significant portion (~50%) of the island's electricity needs at a stable cost.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. We are committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders to achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. Our community has

gained nationwide recognition for our unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project.

We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,  
Paul Hanley  
Box 71 Kualapuu 96757  
808 213-5511

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 170 / HCR 180

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Scott Ensign, and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a seasonal resident of Molokai I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) for a number of years (sometimes over Zoom) and want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project in order to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider carefully. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir outlined below.

### Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for ag use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources, and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

### Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
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### Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

- The solar generated from panels on the reservoir, especially if community-owned, could provide a significant portion (~50%) of the island's electricity needs at a stable cost.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. We are committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders to achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. Our community has

gained nationwide recognition for our unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project.

We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Scott Ensign, Ph.D.

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 9:39:32 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Kahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I emphatically support HR170 and all companion resolutions.

Mahalo,

Greg Kahn

Molokai

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 9:39:32 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chase Livingston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Chase Livingston and I am testifying in strong support of this bill. I have studied these issues for many years and believe these solar resources over water offer great benefits to the people of Hawaii.

The currently evolving energy crisis in the middle east drives home the urgency and importance of developing resilient local energy systems in Hawaii. Increasing the energy we generate from true renewable sources (solar, wind, some hydro, tidal, etc.) will have huge environmental, climate, social, and financial benefits to the people of Hawaii.

But we are also in a water crisis and food crisis, with urgent need to increase and protect access to local food and clean water for drinking and agriculture.

Floating solar projects over agricultural reservoirs and irrigation water infrastructure is exactly the type of thing we need to be pursuing aggressively, right now. These projects allow us to increase the solar generation capacity without taking up land that could otherwise be used for productive crops and agriculture. It also will help reduce evaporation losses from our surface water resources. By putting the solar panels over water, it will also increase the efficiency of the PV systems, generating more electricity. It is a WIN WIN WIN.

- Energy/water nexus: does not take up agricultural land/ reduces water loss through evaporation.
- for irrigation canals, results indicated that shading induced a significant decrease of the daily evaporation rate, ranging from 50% to 80%. (see section 2.3.2 of attached report).
  - At the Kualapu'u reservoir on Moloka'i, water loss through evaporation has been estimated to be: "Pan evaporation loss (Table 7) from the 100-acre reservoir surface is expected to be as much as 20% of the daily west portal flow (Table 2) during the hot summer months when water is least available."
    - From p. 28 of <https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ADCAnnual2001.pdf>
  - "The calculated losses due to evaporation of 0.47 and 0.18 inch per day from 100 acres of water are 1.276 and 0.489 mgd. The expected loss by evaporation is 307 million gallons of water per year based on the annual average evaporation rate of 0.31 inch per day."
    - From p. 14 of <https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ADCAnnual2001.pdf>

- Other, far crazier ideas have been pursued in the past (and thankfully not followed up on) - the link mentions putting oil or other material into the reservoir to reduce the evaporation... but it makes the water undrinkable (only for irrigation and who wants that on their plants).
- An additional advantage is the natural cooling of the SPVS. The performance of photovoltaic modules varies as a function of its operating temperature. The developers of the Narmada project (see Section 2.2) have estimated that the lower temperature will increase solar panels' efficiency by as high as 7%, compared to ground-mounted installations. (see section 2.3.1 of report).

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 10:08:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Matt Yamashita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Matt Yamashita, Molokai resident for 48 years, born and raised. I am in strong support of HR 170 / HCR 180.

I am an Emmy award winning filmmaker and an active community leader through my participation on numerous nonprofit boards over the past 20 years. I helped form the Molokai Clean Energy Initiative in 2015 which evolved into the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) today.

While I am not currently active in the work, I have been tracking the efforts of MCEH and its partners for many years, especially in regard to the Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan (CERAP). The efforts to develop the CERAP have been extremely thoughtful, well informed, and extremely inclusive of community input at every stage.

One of the proposed projects born out of this community planning process is the idea of floating solar on the Kualapu'u reservoir. It is a brilliant idea with many potential win-win outcomes, for both energy and water security on Molokai. Therefore, I want to strongly encourage DoAB to support the continued exploration of this Floating PV project designed by the community with the guidance of energy experts.

Molokai has some of the highest energy prices in the US. The island remains almost entirely dependent on fossil fuel for electricity. Water resources are limited and need to be protected. A utility scale Floating PV system on the Kualapuu Reservoir shows strong potential for helping transition the electricity grid to renewable energy, stabilize energy prices, demonstrate both the feasibility and high efficiency of floating PV, while reducing high evaporation rates of Molokai Irrigation System water stored in the reservoir.

This project holds huge potential not just for Molokai, but the entire state as a model of cutting edge, community-driven renewable energy solutions that maximize resource sustainability.

I ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Matt N Yamashita

Testimony of  
**Nicole Schroeter-Simms**

**Before the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS, AND COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Wednesday, April 8, 2026  
10:15am  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

Providing Support of  
**HR 170 / HCR 180**

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Nicole Schroeter-Simms and I am writing in support of HCR 180 / HR 170. I encourage DoAB to support the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community as part of the Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan (CERAP). One of CERAP's ten priority community identified projects is Floating Photovoltaics (FPV) at Kualapu'u Reservoir. Molokai Clean Energy Hui has \$1.4M of federal funding from the Department of Energy, which expires in mid-September 2026 to progress FPV feasibility studies. HCR180/HR170 strongly supports the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration with these studies, including providing short-term access to the reservoir. Access is needed to perform hydrological, boundary and other surveys to progress FPV to a 30% engineering design.

MCEH is open to sharing survey results with other agencies and stakeholders, and Kualapu'u could be a pilot project under HCR/180/HR170 at no cost to the State.

I have worked as part of the Molokai Clean Energy Hui as the CERAP Admin Assistant since August 2025. During this time I have participated in multiple community events aimed at advancing the CERAP efforts. Community members have interacted with us by completing surveys, attending workshops, and engaging in honest, thoughtful discussions. Based on these interactions, it is clear that Molokai residents would like to further explore the possibility of utilizing the Kualapu'u Reservoir as a potential site for a community scale PV project.

A few beneficial aspects of a Floating PV array are as follows:

- Decreased water evaporation leaving more water in the reservoir for farmers to utilize.
- Decreased water temperature leading to less algae growth and potential for better water quality.
- Decreased land developed saving an estimated 36 acres of land from an alternative ground mounted solar array of the same system size.

We believe that through community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, we can achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. We ask that you consider engaging with the Molokai Clean Energy Hui and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Nicole Schroeter-Simms  
Molokai Resident  
CERAP Admin Assistant

**LATE**

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 11:02:28 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roland Yartzoff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha committee members:

Floating solar systems have a performance advantage, as the water cools the solar panels thereby making them more efficient. On hot days, an improvement of 15% more efficiency can be expected. In the case of Kualapu'u Reservoir, there are two additional benefits.

First, wind-generated swells have eroded the southern embankment of the reservoir. This has been an ongoing problem requiring staff time to correct. Second, floating solar panels absorb light energy which would otherwise be used by algae for their growth. By installing floating solar panels, the frequency required to remove algae and clean filters will be reduced thereby reducing staff time for maintenance. I thank you for your attention to this matter.

Cordially, Roland Yartzoff

**LATE**

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 11:24:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Iolani Kuoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, and Videoconference

Relating to the DoAB: Exploring Renewable Energy Projects with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture; Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is 'Iolani Kuoha, and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a resident of Moloka'i, I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH), and I want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed the mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir, outlined below.

Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for ag use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
- Due to the design characteristics of FPV, 7MW can be produced with PV on 15 acres of the reservoir's surface area (only 17.3% of total reservoir surface area) vs 36 acres if the same-sized solar system were land-based.

Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

- Solar generated from panels on the reservoir, especially if community-owned, could provide a significant portion (~50%) of the island's electricity needs at a stable cost. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. We are committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders, to achieve

energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way.

Our community has gained nationwide recognition for our unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project.

We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

'Iolani Kuoha

kuohaiolani1@gmail.com

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 170 / HCR 180

**LATE**

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is Mercedes K. Ritte and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a resident of Molokai, I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) and want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir outlined below.

### Evaporative savings and water quality improvement:

- The panels floating on the surface of the reservoir will improve water quality for ag use and decrease the amount of water lost to evaporation by ~24.7 million gallons per year (~13% of the reservoir's current evaporation).
- This would decrease the need for pumping water into the reservoir, saving our islands' water resources, and saving electricity costs to run the pumps.

### Avoided land disturbance:

- Placing the panels on the surface of the reservoir means less vacant land being disturbed for solar development, including agricultural land.
- Due to the design characteristics of FPV, 7MW can be produced with PV on 15 acres of the reservoir's surface area (only 17.3% of total reservoir surface area) vs 36 acres if the same sized solar system was land based.

### Energy stability for Molokai ratepayers:

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The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's collaboration is critical to the next phase of this work. We are committed to community-led planning, in partnership with experts and stakeholders to achieve energy resilience for Molokai in the most efficient, resilient, sustainable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible way. Our community has

gained nationwide recognition for our unprecedented community-led engagement and support for this innovative FPV project.

We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Mercedes K. Ritte

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 2:29:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've been following the Molokai community closely and their efforts to lead by example. I'm in support of continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the Molokai community. The key is that this project is designed *by the community*. Much time and exploration has been invested by community residents and community leaders to not only lead a participatory process and but to arrive to solutions that are alligned with their own values while also moving the island toward clean energy and more affordable energy. I am in support of community led efforts in Hawaii to transform our energy ecosystem and Molokai has stepped up to lead in this way.

Mahalo nui,  
Stephanie Chang

**LATE**

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 6:42:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lori Buchanan	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

In SUPPORT

**LATE**

**HR-170**

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 7:50:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/8/2026 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
malcolm mackey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Our names are Malcolm Mackey and Keri Zacher. We are residents of Molokai and we urge you to consider supporting the use of ag water reservoirs for solar energy generation.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Mackey and Keri Zacher

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HR 170 / HCR 180**

**LATE**

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

10:15am

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

**Relating to the DoAB Exploring Renewable Energy Projects** with Reservoirs and Irrigation Infrastructure.

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, and Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection,

My name is [REDACTED], and I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HR 170. As a resident of Molokai [or representative of the [REDACTED] on Molokai], I have participated in the community-led renewable energy planning process (Molokai Community Energy Resilience Action Plan/CERAP) facilitated by the Molokai Clean Energy Hui (MCEH) and want to encourage DoAB support for the continued exploration of the Floating PV project designed by the community. It is important to continue investigating the technical, economic, and cultural feasibility of this project in order to identify real trade-offs for the community and the State to consider. Recent prefeasibility studies confirmed mutual benefits of FPV on the Kualapu'u Reservoir outlined below.

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We ask that you pass HR170/HCR180 and strongly support the Department's collaboration with the MCEH and Molokai Community as we continue to explore mutually beneficial ways to support Molokai's energy and agriculture industries.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,