

GM 294

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2008
2:45 P.M.
ROOM 224

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 294
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDES, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, SEAN O'KEEFE, FOR
A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2012

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the reappointment of Sean O'Keefe for the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Mr. O'Keefe has been an active participant on the committee for the past 4 years. He has attended all the meetings and is one of the discussion leaders. He volunteers for projects and participates at all levels including a subcommittee on the development of retail signs and also has experience in waste disposal issues which were an important discussion topic for the committee.

Mr. O'Keefe has served on the Advisory Committee under an interim appointment since July 1, 2004, representing the sugar industry. Mr. O'Keefe has worked extensively over the past fifteen years on compliance with environmental, safety and health laws and regulations, impacting agricultural operations in Hawaii. He is a member of the Hawaii Department of Health's Air Rules Advisory Committee and Water Quality Standards Advisory Committee. He is currently employed as the Director of Environmental Affairs at Alexander and Baldwin, Inc.

His reappointment to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides for an additional four years is strongly recommended.



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

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819
PH: (808)848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921

APRIL 1, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON GM 294
DON R. GERBIG

Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:

My name is Alan Takemoto, Executive Director, of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, which is the largest non-profit general agriculture organization representing approximately 1,600 farm and ranch family members statewide.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF) strongly supports the nomination of Sean O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Mr. O'Keefe's strong background in Environmental Sciences would be an asset to the State of Hawaii if appointed to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Mr. O'Keefe's experience implementing environmental stewardship practices is both proven and highly respected.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation is pleased to support the nomination of Sean O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. We hope that you will give Mr. O'Keefe's nomination to this position serious consideration.



Maui County Farm Bureau

*An Affiliate of the American Farm Bureau Federation and Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation
Serving Maui's Farmers and Ranchers*

April 1, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON
GM 294
SEAN O'KEEFE

Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:

My name is Warren Watanabe, Executive Director of the Maui County Farm Bureau, a non-profit general agriculture organization and an affiliate of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation.

MCFB strongly supports the nomination of Sean O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Mr. O'Keefe has a very strong background in Environmental Sciences. His strong ethic in implementing practices which are safe and represent environmental stewardship is respected. His membership on the Pesticide Advisory Committee will bring value to the meetings and help in a good decision-making process.

We respectfully request your support in appointing Mr. O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this opinion.



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

99-193 Aiea Heights Drive, Suite 300

Aiea, Hawaii 96701

Ph: 808-487-5561/Fax: 808-486-5020

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

GM 294

CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDES

**of
SEAN O'KEEFE**

April 1, 2008

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

My name is Stephanie Whalen. I am President and Director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC). I am testifying today on behalf of the center, our research and support staff, and our members and clients.

HARC strongly supports the Consideration and Confirmation of SEAN O'KEEFE to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides (GM 294), representing the sugar industry.

I have known and worked with Sean since 1993 when he began as an Environmental Affairs Specialist and representative to the then Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) Environmental Standards Committee for Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company (HC&S).

In his work for HC&S, Kauai Coffee Company and other subsidiaries of Alexander & Baldwin, Sean has always demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the wide range of environmental regulations with which Hawaii's farmers must comply, and more importantly an ability to help them determine *how* to comply. His knack for deciphering often complex rules and applying them to real-world situations has served his company and the sugar industry well. By determining in advance how proposed regulations are likely to impact farming, the Department of Agriculture will be in a better position to ensure that its regulations are tailored to fit real world practicalities so that the objectives of these regulations can be met without unduly impeding the farmers' ability to farm. Sean has ability and motivation to assist the Advisory Committee on Pesticides and the Department in developing pesticide regulations that are both effective and workable.

I respectfully urge you to recommend that Mr. O'Keefe's appointment to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides be confirmed.



HAWAII AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER

FORMERLY HAWAIIAN SUGAR PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION

99-193 AIEA HEIGHTS DRIVE, SUITE 300, AIEA, HAWAII 96701-3911

TELEPHONE: (808) 487-5561 FAX: (808) 486-5020

<http://www.hawaiiag.org/harc>

March 4, 2008

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Chair, Senate Committee Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Confirmation of Sean O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides

Dear Senator Tokuda:

I am writing to strongly support the confirmation of Sean O'Keefe to the State's Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Sean is currently serving on the Committee, and I believe he is the best candidate to represent the sugar industry.

I have known and worked with Sean since he started managing environmental affairs at Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company (HC&S) in 1993. During that time, Sean has demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the wide range of environmental regulations with which Hawaii's farmers must comply, and more importantly an ability to help them determine *how* to comply. Through his present service on the Committee, Sean has shown the ability and motivation to assist the Advisory Committee on Pesticides and the Department of Agriculture in developing pesticide regulations that are both effective and workable.

I respectfully urge you to recommend that Mr. O'Keefe's reappointment to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides be confirmed.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Whalen
President and Director,
Experiment Station



ALEXANDER & BALDWIN, INC.

March 4, 2008

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Chair, Senate Committee Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Nomination of Sean O'Keefe to Serve on Advisory Committee on Pesticides

Dear Senator Tokuda:

Thank you for considering my nomination to serve on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. I was happy to learn of my nomination for reappointment to the committee by the Governor, and I look forward to continuing to assist the Department of Agriculture in developing and revising its laws and regulations governing the use of pesticides.

As requested, I have enclosed a copy of my resume and am responding to the questions posed in your letter of February 12, 2008.

Why do you wish to be a member of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides?

I have been involved in assisting in the development and revision of state environmental regulations on numerous occasions in the past, including my present service on the Pesticide Advisory Committee and past service on various Department of Health advisory committees. I find it both challenging and rewarding to work together with other stakeholders, each with their own varying interests and viewpoints, towards a common objective. I would like to continue to apply this experience in helping the Department of Agriculture to ensure the safe and lawful use of pesticides in Hawaii.

How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of an Advisory Committee on Pesticides member?

The role of each member is to advise and assist the Department of Agriculture in developing and revising its laws and regulations relating to pesticides, and to further advise the Department regarding pesticide issues in general. Because the Committee is made up of representatives of various stakeholder groups (including pesticide users, research organizations, and environmental and citizen's groups), I believe that each member has a responsibility to ensure that the concerns of the group they represent are considered by the Committee when determining how best to advise the Department. A clear understanding of the operations they are seeking to regulate can greatly assist any regulatory agency in developing rules that are workable in the real world while at the same time meeting their objectives. As a representative of the sugar industry, and of agriculture in general, my role is to ensure that the Department understands what will be required of farmers to comply with a proposed regulation and to assist in identifying ways to make compliance practicable. At the same time, all Committee members have an overarching responsibility to help ensure that pesticide laws and regulations are protective of human health and the environment.

Given your understanding of the responsibilities of an Advisory Committee on Pesticides member, why do you believe you are qualified for the position, including your skills, expertise, or knowledge which would aid in decision making?

During my current term, the Committee assisted the Department of Agriculture in finalizing the first major revision to the state's pesticide regulations in over 20 years. I believe I and all Committee members gained valuable experience with this major revision that will help to facilitate future updates to the rules. Having sometimes observed the consequences of development of regulations without meaningful input from affected stakeholders, I understand the importance of carefully evaluating the potential impact of a regulation before it is enacted, and of crafting regulations so as to minimize unacceptable, unintended impacts. I have worked in the sugar industry for over a decade, and have a good understanding of our farming operations, and of how these operations can be affected by changes in the regulations. Much of my experience in the environmental compliance arena has been in reading and interpreting regulations, determining how they apply to our operations, and devising policies and procedures to comply with the regulations. By bringing this experience to the rulemaking process, I believe I can continue to assist the Department of Agriculture in developing regulations that meet the objective of protecting human health and the environment while still allowing farmers to practicably utilize the tools they need to farm.

What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

In the near term, I and other members of the Committee expect to assist the Department in implementing 2007 legislation (Act 174) requiring the posting of warning signs at pesticide retailers, and in initiating a program to assist farmers and others in properly disposing of old, outdated pesticides. I also hope to assist the Department in refining its review process for new and safer pesticide chemistries, particularly with regard to ensuring the protection of groundwater resources. Overall, I hope that my participation on the Committee will assist the Department in ensuring that future laws and regulations are informed by real world practicalities while at the same time meeting the Department's regulatory objectives. Sound, well thought out regulations are essential to the continued viability of farming in Hawaii and should be a goal of the Committee and the Department.

Name three qualities that best describe you and that would distinguish you for consideration. How would these qualities benefit the Advisory Committee on Pesticides?

I think my experience in the field of environmental regulation is perhaps the quality that most distinguishes me for consideration because it gives me an understanding of the importance of formulating regulations that are workable and that meet the desired objective, as well as insight into how best to accomplish this. My science background, particularly in chemistry, is another quality that enhances my ability to understand pesticide issues, especially with regard to potential impacts on human health and the environment. My experience in the sugar industry of course helps me to appreciate the real-world impacts of regulation. I also bring to the Committee an ability to think through complex issues, and to develop and evaluate a number of alternatives for reaching a desired objective. I believe that all of these qualities are ideally suited to my role on the Committee.

Name one previous experience that would distinguish you for consideration. How did this benefit the Advisory Committee on Pesticides?

While I believe I was well qualified to serve on the Committee when I was first appointed in 2004, I feel that my present service on the Committee may be the one experience that would most distinguish me for consideration. Pesticide issues in general, and the development of regulations in particular, can be very complex, often involving a steep learning curve. I feel that my contributions during the current term have assisted the Committee in accomplishing its objectives, and that the continuity and experience I can bring would help the Committee to continue to operate most efficiently and effectively in the future.

Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise as you serve in this capacity?
No, I cannot. As noted above, I understand that my role on the Committee carries with it responsibilities as an advocate for agriculture along with a responsibility shared by all members to ensure that the Department of Agriculture is well advised on all issues relating to pesticides. I have received training from the Office of Information Practices on Hawaii's Sunshine Law, recognize its importance in preventing possible conflicts, and understand and follow its requirements.

Thank you for considering my nomination to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. I look forward to my confirmation hearing and to answering any questions your Committee may have at that time.

Sincerely,



Sean M. O'Keefe
Director, Environmental Affairs
Alexander & Baldwin, Inc.



Frank E. Kiger
Plantation General Manager

March 4, 2008

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Nomination of Sean M. O'Keefe to Serve on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides

Dear Senator Tokuda:

I am writing to support the nomination of Sean M. O'Keefe to serve on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Sean has served on the Committee since 2004 and has ably represented the sugar industry during that time.

As a result of his fourteen years of service at Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company (HC&S), Sean has an excellent understanding of farming operations and practices both at HC&S and our sister company, Kauai Coffee Company. His position as Director of Environmental Affairs for HC&S' parent company, Alexander & Baldwin, Inc. (A&B), also requires him to have an in-depth knowledge of a wide range of environmental regulations, including those related to pesticide use. This combination of operational and regulatory knowledge makes him an ideal candidate to advise the Department of Agriculture on issues relating to pesticide regulations and their potential impact on the farming community.

In addition to his present service on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides, Sean is regularly involved in rulemaking and legislative activities at both the state and federal level, both through preparation of public testimony and participation in regulatory advisory groups. I am confident that his considerable experience both in the rulemaking process and in analyzing proposed regulations to determine their likely impacts will continue to make him a valuable asset to the committee.

Sean has my strongest recommendation and support for reappointment to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. I respectfully encourage your committee to recommend his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Frank E. Kiger
Plantation General Manager

GAY & ROBINSON, INC.

P.O. BOX 156 KAUMAKANI, HAWAII 96747-0156
PHONE: (808) 335-3133 FAX: (808) 335-6424

March 4, 2008

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Nomination of Sean M. O'Keefe to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides

Dear Senator Tokuda:

Please consider my strong recommendation in support of Mr. Sean O'Keefe for reappointment as the sugar industry representative to the state's Advisory Committee on Pesticides.

As you know, the purpose of the committee is to advise and assist the Department of Agriculture in developing and revising laws and rules governing the use of pesticides. The committee includes representatives from a variety of groups, including sugarcane growers, so as to ensure that the Department will be well-informed by a range of interests in making decisions impacting regulation of pesticides. Mr. O'Keefe's experience in environmental regulation, in the sugar industry, and in currently serving on the committee make him well suited to advise the Department on matters relating to the use of these chemicals by agriculture in general and particularly in sugarcane and coffee cultivation. His ability to analyze regulatory requirements, determine their applicability to farming operations, and devise methods to help comply with them will continue to be an asset to the committee and to the Department, and will greatly benefit the regulatory process.

Mr. O'Keefe has my sincere support, and I urge you to recommend that his reappointment to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides be confirmed.

Very Truly Yours,



E. Alan Kennett
President and General Manager
Gay & Robinson, Inc.



Frank E. Kiger
Plantation General Manager

March 4, 2008

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