

**HB 1616 HD1**

LINDA LINGLE  
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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**LATE**

TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Tuesday, March 11, 2008  
2:45 p.m.  
Room 224

HOUSE BILL NO. 1616, HD1  
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

House Bill No. 1616 appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for developing and conducting a feasibility and cost study for establishing a primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species used in the Hawaii aquaculture industry. The department supports the intent of this bill; however, we have concerns about the possible adverse budgetary impact that this bill will have on the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

Present facilities are outmoded and are split between two locations, Halawa and Sand Island, which have served the Hawaii aquaculture industry for more than 30 years. With the importation of non-native species for stocking material and broodstock, a secured primary facility to quarantine incoming species is needed. A state-of-the-art, secured primary quarantine facility and laboratory for evaluating and diagnosing diseases and testing prevention technologies would assist in meeting Federal and international requirements for aquatic imports and exports.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HAWAII FARM BUREAU FEDERATION  
2343 ROSE STREET  
HONOLULU, HI 96819**

MARCH 11, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON HB 1616  
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Chairs 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 supports HB 1616, which appropriates funds to develop and conduct a study that includes cost estimates for the establishment of a primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species used in Hawaii's aquaculture industry. Farm Bureau supports this effort to improve the aquaculture industry's ability to not only sustain themselves but also to expand and improve their long term success.

We urge this committee to approve the passage of this measure.

Thank you.



# Hawaii Aquaculture Association

To:

THE SENATE  
THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Sen. J. Kalani English, Vice Chair

## HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, March 11, 2008  
TIME: 2:45 PM  
PLACE: Conference Room 224, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

From: Ron Weidenbach, President, Hawaii Aquaculture Association  
Phone: 429-3147, Email: hawaiiifish@gmail.com

Re: **HB 1616 HD1**, Relating to Aquaculture

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Aquaculture Association (HAA) **strongly supports House Bill 1616 HD1**, which appropriates \$75,000 to develop the concept and determine the feasibility and estimated costs for establishing a Primary Quarantine Facility for aquatic species utilized in the Hawaii aquaculture industry and by the aquaculture research community.

Aquaculture is one the fastest growing segments of diversified agriculture in the State totaling \$21.3M in wholesale product value in 2006. Much of the aquaculture industry relies on importation of non-native species for research, stocking and broodstock. Currently, a secure facility to quarantine incoming aquatic species used in the aquaculture industry is needed to allow for inspection and testing by the State Aquaculture Veterinarian, but is not available.

As part of this facility, a sophisticated laboratory which utilizes molecular biological techniques capable of disease diagnostics, evaluating and testing disease treatments, and developing disease prevention technologies is needed to continue to support the industry and give it a competitive advantage. Further, involvement of the Federal government is expected in both the regulation of aquatic animal imports and exports and in the funding of disease research. Having this quarantine and laboratory facility would position Hawaii as a continued leader in commercial aquaculture research and development, and in a stronger position to compete for Federal research dollars.

The HAA strongly requests the passage of HB 1616 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

March 10, 2008

To: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair  
Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

From: Jo-Ann Leong, Ph. D.,  
45-007 Ka Hanahou Place  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Re: Letter of testimony IN SUPPORT of HB 1616 HD1, slated for discussion Tuesday, March 11, at 2:45 PM in Conference Room 224

I strongly support **HB 1616 HD1**, a bill allocating funds to conduct a feasibility study for a primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species in the Hawaii. I submit this testimony as a private citizen and a resident of Kaneohe.

Hawaiian aquaculture is a growing industry and its continued growth requires an aquaculture quarantine facility and a facility that allows the secure development of different treatments for potential aquatic animal pathogens in Hawaii. There is no other facility of this type in the United States for the experimental study of aquatic animal pathogens in semi-tropical and tropical waters.

At a time when concern for invasive species is receiving increased attention by the Legislature, it is appropriate that the Legislature take proactive steps to curtail the introduction of pathogens with potential to infect native aquatic species of Hawaii. A quarantine facility for aquatic animals is a critical need and this facility will be required to examine the potential effect of aquatic pathogens on native Hawaiian species.

In my previous experience as a Microbiologist and Scientist at the Center for Fish Disease Research at Oregon State University, I have found that quarantine and research facilities for aquatic animal pathogens are important to prevent the introduction of diseases in previously disease free regions and to develop treatments for diseases that are already present in the area. Hawaii, as a central receiving point for many aquatic products from the Pacific region and a research center for the Pacific islands, should provide leadership in this area. I urge the committee to **pass HB1616 HD1** and thank you for this opportunity to testify.