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Statement of
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before the
**HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE
AND
WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

LATA
Testimony

Wednesday, January 30, 2008
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 2316
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

Chairs Tsuji and Ito, Vice Chairs Brower and Karamatsu, and Members of the House Committees on Agriculture and Water, Land, Ocean Resources and Hawaiian Affairs.

The Office of Planning (OP) does not support the proposed bill which seeks to restrict reclassification or rezoning of lands within the State Agricultural District if they are currently used primarily for agriculture by a resident owner or lessee with related gross farm income of at least \$1,000,000. OP fully supports efforts to identify and protect the State's important agricultural lands. However, this bill appears to be limited in its scope with protection being afforded only to larger agricultural operations and potentially leaving unprotected the many small, diversified operations that exist at present or in the future. Additionally, this bill may actually create negative incentives for landowners considering leasing lands for future agricultural activities.

Current initiatives by the State and Counties to identify Important Agricultural Lands (IAL) and develop incentives for agricultural activities for landowners and farmers appears to present a more comprehensive approach to protection and management of our agricultural lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.