

HB 2593 HD1

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT 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. 2593, H.D. 1
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 2593, H.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to provide funding to pursue drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the state. The department supports the intent of this bill; however, we have concerns about the possible adverse budgetary impact that this bill may have on the Executive Supplemental Budget request, and defers to the Department of Land and Natural Resources regarding the proper expending agency.

The effects of drought on agriculture can be devastating. With the possibility of drought lasting for years, crop yields can fall dramatically and farms can close. Approximately two years ago, the Commission on Water Resource Management assisted in the creation of drought committees in each county. The committees then came up with potential projects to implement to mitigate the effects of drought. This bill represents recognition of the importance and need for these projects.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIRPERSON
OF THE COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

on House Bill 2593, House Draft 1 – Relating to Drought Mitigation

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

March 11, 2008

The purpose of House Bill 2593, House Draft 1 is to provide an unspecified amount of funding to pursue drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the State. While the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) recognizes the importance of mitigating the effects of drought, as it is consistent with the goals and objectives of our program and the Hawaii Drought Plan, the Department nonetheless is unable to support this measure as funding for projects would negatively impact the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

Droughts have severely affected Hawaii in the past, and as part of a natural climate cycle, droughts will impact the State in the future. In addition to agriculture and livestock industries, drought induced impacts will also affect other segments of the community, such as water supply, commerce, environment, public health and safety.

The Department concurs with the importance of drought planning and the effective implementation of mitigation measures and strategies. The Hawaii Drought Plan and the County Drought Mitigation Strategies identify and recommend implementation of drought mitigation actions, subject to available funding. These Drought Mitigation Strategies were developed in consultation with key stakeholders who participated as members of the respective local County Drought Committees to identify and prioritize projects to help reduce the impacts of drought in their communities.

Should available funding be identified in support of these projects, the Department recommends that such funding be provided directly to the Counties for implementation of drought mitigation activities at the county level.

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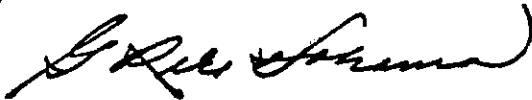
Director of Council Services
Ken Fukuoka



COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov/council

March 10, 2008

TO: Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: G. Riki Hokama
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 11, 2008; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2593, HD 1,
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to strengthen county efforts to alleviate the impact of droughts by appropriating funds for drought mitigation projects and measures in each county.

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. The implementation of the drought mitigation plan developed by the counties' drought committees is of vital importance to Maui County, which has been under the constant threat of drought for several years.
2. The lingering drought and near-drought conditions have affected all of Maui County's agriculture industry, from the independent family farmers to the agribusiness stalwarts that have historically provided steady employment. Maui County's invaluable green environment has also suffered, with native species put at risk. We must support the efforts of those who have developed mitigation plans, involving improved water storage and conservation, to protect the economy and ecology.
3. While Maui County has been doing its best to provide for the prudent conservation of the County's precious water supply by encouraging the use of reclaimed water and imposing restrictions on the use of potable water for the irrigation of golf courses, much remains to be done. The funds provided by this legislation would jumpstart additional efforts supported by the county drought committees.

For the foregoing reasons, I support this measure.

**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 2593, HD 1
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

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 2592, which appropriates funds for drought mitigation projects in each county of the state.

Drought is one the most debilitating factors that continues to face farmers and ranchers statewide. When drought occurs, farmers and ranchers are the first segments of the community to be asked or required to cut back on water usage. Without adequate water, farmers and ranchers income and production will be dramatically affected beyond the drought period as it will take time for normal production levels to begin.

In 2000, legislation was enacted for a 4 percent tax credit and it expired in 2005 as utilization was low due to only obtaining a 4 percent tax credit. We had urged and continue to urge that the tax credit for this issue that impacts the entire agricultural industry be increase to a substantial amount as list in this bill at 50 percent.

We need to make sure that sufficient tax incentives are at the level to truly encourage farmers and ranchers to make substantial investments in drought mitigation facilities.

We respectfully ask that you support the passage of this measure.

Thank you.



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

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Aiea, Hawaii 96701

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

HOUSE BILL 2593 HD1

RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

March 11, 2008

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

My name is Stephanie Whalen. I am President and Research 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 of House Bill 2593 HD1 Relating to Drought Mitigation and requests an amendment of the effective date to July 1, 2008.

Conservation of water and its appropriate management in times of shortage is a critical issue for island communities. Strategic planning for drought mitigation is important and has been accomplished by our counties with input from their respective communities. As water becomes the limiting factor for society water conservation and improved management should rise to the top of the state's priorities.

Funds are now needed to implement the counties' plans.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96843



March 11, 2008

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Manager and Chief Engineer

DEAN A. NAKANO
Deputy Manager and Chief Engineer

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda
Chair and Members
The Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tokuda:

Subject: House Bill No. 2593, House Draft 1, Relating to Drought Mitigation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 2593 HD 1, Relating to Drought Mitigation.

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply supports House Bill No. 2593 HD 1, which appropriates funds for drought mitigation projects in each county.

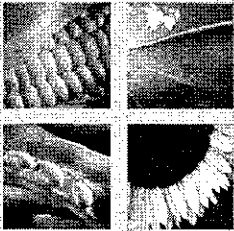
We have participated with the Commission on Water Resource Management and other State and County agencies and organizations in the development of the Hawaii Drought Plan. With the State's assistance, the County drought committees have developed drought mitigation strategies and proposed projects for three critical areas: wildland fires, water supply, and agriculture and commerce.

Implementation has started, but while these efforts have taken positive steps toward drought mitigation, more needs to be done. Adequate funding is needed to continue to implement these drought plans.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2593, HD 1, relating to drought mitigation.

Very truly yours,

CLIFFORD P. LUM
Manager and Chief Engineer



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Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony by: Sarah Styan
HB 2593hd1, Drought Mitigation
Senate AHW Committee
Tuesday, March 11, 2008
Room 224: 2:45 pm

LATE

Position: Support

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Senate AWH Committee:

My name is Sarah Styan. I am a Kauai resident, President of HCIA and research scientist of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Waimea Research Station. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii for nearly 40 years. The HCIA is comprised of five member companies that farm an estimated 8,000 acres on four islands, valued at \$97.6 million in operating budget (2006/2007 HASS). We are proud members of Hawaii's diversified agriculture and life sciences industries.

Your support is requested for this appropriations request that would fund implementation of the counties' drought mitigation plans. Hawaii is still recovering from about ten years of drought. We must be pro-active in capturing water and holding it in reserve for drought conditions.

Your support of this measure is appreciated. I can be reached at 808-338-8300 ext. 113 if there are any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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