

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

LATE

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

I am writing as a concerned resident of Honolulu County to **strongly support HB 1616 HD1** allocating funds to develop the concept of, and conduct a feasibility study for, the establishment of a primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species used in the Hawaii aquaculture industry. Local aquaculture has made significant economic progress in the last decade and holds enormous potential for innovative and sustainable production in the State. I believe establishing an aquaculture quarantine facility will allow Hawaii to become more self-sufficient and is proactive in terms of providing biosecurity and diagnostic support to this growing industry. Too many times we read of aquaculture disease outbreaks in other areas that are traced to a breakdown in simple quarantine or disease surveillance of imports.

Many Hawaii residents, myself included, support local industry and prefer to purchase locally produced aquaculture products. I understand that our industry cannot maintain hatcheries for all species local consumers want and that some import is required. Adequate quarantine facilities appropriate for Hawaii's aquaculture industry are currently nonexistent and passing HB 1616 HB1 is the first step required to determine what our State needs to provide relevant quarantine for aquaculture imports. There are many good quarantine facilities on the mainland US or in countries with similar import/export concerns and similar species in production. This bill does not call for the feasibility analysis and plan of a unique or newly described style of facility. It calls for a responsible legislative effort to protect local industry and local natural resources following guidelines already developed in other areas. Hawaii needs only make a survey of what is being successfully implemented in other areas with modifications best suited to meet local needs. What is important is that we do this in a timely fashion, **NOW**.

Although the language of HB 1616 HB1 describes the importance of this legislation for local importers, more is at stake. For our shrimp industry as well as the growing offshore aquaculture industry, the financial advantage of being able to export product is obvious. However, many of the locations Hawaii exports locally produced products are becoming more stringent about their import regulations (for example, Australia and the European Union). Even products not requiring import of broodstock or non-native species will be impacted if we cannot adequately quarantine the similar products that are being imported into our State. If Hawaii's aquaculture export industry is going to grow, the ability to address biosecurity issues relating to industry imports is mandatory.

In addition to benefiting aquaculture, this quarantine facility will be a direct benefit to the State since aquatic resources are precious and accidental import of potential disease agents may affect our natural resources. Even the transport of commodity (dead) shrimp for human consumption that is still infectious to other shrimps or crabs has been reported in the news to impact shrimp and crabs in their native environment in other parts of the world. There is a fish virus, viral

hemorrhagic septicemia virus (VHSV), recently identified in the Great Lakes region of the mainland in native fish that was previously believed to only affect specific aquaculture species of fish in other areas of the world. Education and awareness campaigns about VHSV are now being developed by a number of USDA and fisheries organizations in the US to educate the public about how to reduce the potential of transferring this serious disease agent to new areas. All this highlights the importance that Hawaii builds capacity in this area in a proactive rather than reactive manner.

A quarantine facility will also assist in complying with new federal regulations affecting aquatic animal imports and exports that may arise as part of the USDA's National Aquatic Animal Health Plan. Hawaii already has a voluntary aquaculture disease surveillance program sponsored by the HDOA Aquaculture Development Program (ADP), indicating the industry's willingness to participate in surveillance and, by extension, quarantine programs. While stakeholders will contribute to the associated costs for using the proposed facility, a feasibility study must be conducted to identify all interested parties and to develop a cost analysis and operating plan.

Providing a quarantine facility and laboratory will complement current ADP services to facilitate aquaculture health management throughout the State. In summary, having this facility will allow Hawaii to increase biosecurity and provide a quarantine facility for necropsy and diagnostic work-up when aquatic species are seized or die-offs of an unknown origin occur. It may provide an area for necessary aquaculture research to be conducted using specific disease agents or to study non-endemics. It may also provide a facility that has utility to study new aquaculture drugs. At the risk of being repetitive I will say, again, that there is no facility already in existence where this can be adequately accomplished in the State.

I believe the State should move forward to immediately fund this feasibility analysis and plan for a quarantine facility in support of Hawaii aquaculture. It's the only strategy that makes sense given local and global concerns about introducing aquaculture disease into regions previously disease-free. I urge the committee to pass **HB 1616 HD1** and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,



Teresa D. Lewis
45-023 Mahalani Circle
Kaneohe HI 96744
Senate District 24/House District 49



LATE

Day² Resources LLC

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: Kevin Hopkins, Co-owner

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

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Committee Members:

I wish to express my strong support of 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 in Hawaii.

Quarantine and certification of disease-free status are becoming increasingly essential in food production systems. The ad-hoc system now used by the aquaculture industry in Hawaii is clearly inadequate. A system to securely quarantine incoming aquatic species is needed to allow for timely inspection and testing by the State Aquaculture Veterinarian. For example, I am currently unable in verifying the disease free status of sturgeon (fish) eggs that I import from Europe. Further, when I start producing live eggs for export, I need to have those eggs certified for export.

As part of this quarantine system, sophisticated laboratory facilities which utilize molecular biological techniques capable of disease diagnostics, evaluating and testing disease treatments, and developing disease prevention technologies are needed to support the industry and give it a competitive advantage. Having this quarantine and laboratory capability would enhance Hawaii 's position as a leader in commercial aquaculture research and development, and place it in a stronger position to compete for Federal research dollars.

AQUATIC INNOVATIONS

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LATE

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

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

From: David L. Cohen, Owner, Aquatic Innovations
Phone: 585-8600, Fax: 585-8601, Email: aquatic@lava.net

Re: HB 1616, Relating to Quarantine

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Committee Members:

Please accept my written testimony in **very strong support** of the adoption **House Bill No. 1616**.

Sincerely,
David L. Cohen,
Aquatic Innovations

FAX TO 585-0033

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TO: SEN. JILL N. TOKUDA, CHAIR
SEN. J. KALANI ENGLISH, VICE CHAIR

DATE: 3/11/2008

TIME: 2:45 PM

PLACE: Conference Rm 224
State Capitol

RE HB 1616 HD1 Relating to Aquaculture

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, + Committee
Members.

I strongly support HB 1616 HD1 to study to
establish a aquatic primary quarantine facility
and disease diagnostics for Hawai'i aquaculture
industry and to help my North Shore shrimp
farm.

Thank you

HB 1616, HD1 on the quarantine and laboratory facility

LATE

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Clyde Tamaru and I am an aquaculture Specialist with the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program. I am providing testimony as a private citizen and am not representing the University of Hawaii.

I am in full support of the HB 1616 that would be the beginning steps of establishing a much needed quarantine facility for the developing Aquaculture Industry. If the industry is to survive, grow and diversify and become a major contributor to the State's economy industry support such as a quarantine facility is an essential step.

As with other agricultural practices the industry relies heavily on the importation of species. Likewise, in comparison to agriculture aquaculture is a relatively new industry and much work needs to be undertaken in the areas of disease management, treatment and prevention. Because of Hawaii's unique geographic location it has become home to the Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) shrimp broodstock industry that supplies disease free stock to the rest of the world currently accounting for almost 80% of the white shrimp production globally. Support of that burgeoning industry is vital if it is to continue to grow and prosper. Likewise, one of the major koi producers from Japan strategically chose to start in Hawaii again taking advantage of the geographic location that allows their production and export business of show quality product to take place out of harms way of diseases that are moving across the rest of the world. We will need to continue to be proactive with regard to disease surveillance, treatment and management for a host of pathogens and a quarantine facility is an essential part of that process.

For the reasons above I fully support passage of HB 1616 HD1 and would be willing to answer any questions if so desired.

Clyde S. Tamaru, Ph.D.
Aquaculture Specialist