

SB 2516

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 5, 2008, 2:45 P.M.

SENATE BILL NO. 2516
RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill No. 2516. This bill makes an appropriation to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) for \$3,750,000 to plan and design a 300,000,000 gallon reservoir for residential and agricultural use in Upcountry Maui. The DOA supports the intent of the bill and respectfully offers the following comments.

The DOA recommends that if an appropriation is made available by the Legislature, that the appropriation be made to the County of Maui. The subject reservoir will be connected to the Maui Department of Water Supply (MDWS) system which we understand serves primarily **residential** as opposed to agricultural customers. This reservoir has been under consideration for the last few years by the MDWS. The MDWS has recognized that there may be a substantial amount of water that could be

captured during heavy rainfall events in the mountain areas of the district. Since the area has had significant water shortages for some time now, this storm water capture could provide a great benefit to the community. Construction of this reservoir has been estimated to cost between \$200 - \$300 million dollars.

The HDOA, in collaboration with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), has proposed an irrigation system that would serve the lower Kula district. A potential source for this proposed project is the MDWS system that would include this 300,000,000 gallon reservoir. MDWS has stated that it would be difficult to support the construction of the lower Kula agricultural line without the added storage capacity of this new reservoir as it has a difficult time meeting the needs of its current users.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Legislative Testimony

SB2516, RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

February 5, 2007

2:45 p.m.

Room: 224

LATE

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) SUPPORTS, with amendments, SB 2516, which would set aside revenues for the planning and design of an agricultural reservoir for upcountry Maui. This bill also requires federal and county matching funds.

Article XI, section 3, of the Hawaii State constitution, Hawai'i Revised Statutes section 205, and county ordinances all address the need to protect our agricultural lands. These layers of concern mandate that the legislature shall conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands in this State.

OHA only supports this bill with the caveat that the reservoir created only be used for agricultural and not residential uses. Supporting agriculture in our State has a high priority established by the numerous laws and legislation that all try to support a strong agricultural economic base in this State. Reserving water for development under the guise of agriculture would violate all of these worthy mandates. We need to be clear about what lands we want to use for agriculture and what lands we want to live on. Water is a way to define these boundaries, and by amending this bill to only apply to agricultural uses; it will help to determine where those lines are rather than obfuscate them.

Further, in Hawai'i, water is the source of all life. Water is also a foundation of our indigenous culture. Due in no small part to this sacred origin, water in Hawai'i is a public trust resource, protected under the State constitution and Water Code. Despite this important designation, for many years, water in Hawai'i has been, and often continues to be, managed as a commodity, to the detriment of Native Hawaiian rights and interests.

Therefore, OHA takes this opportunity to remind the Legislature of its duty to further the Public Trust water uses of protecting and restoring ecological uses, traditional and customary Hawaiian practices, recreation, and scenic values. As such, OHA requires that this bill not infringe upon those uses and rights.

OHA urges the Committees to PASS HB 2594, with the requirement that the reservoir only be used for agriculture. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Council Chair
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Vice-Chair
Danny A. Mateo

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Director of Council Services
Ken Fukuoka

LATE

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February 4, 2008

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

FROM: G. Riki Hokama
Council Chair *G. Riki Hokama*

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2008; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2516, RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is appropriate \$3,759,000 for the planning and design of a water reservoir to serve the agricultural and residential needs of Maui's Upcountry area, provided that the Federal and County governments provide matching funds.

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. Creating additional storage capacity for Maui's Upcountry water distribution systems has long been a priority for the County.
2. Currently, there is a waiting list of more than 1,200 County water reservations for the Upcountry area.
3. Due to shortages the County's Upcountry water systems, drought warnings are frequently issued by the Department of Water Supply.

For the foregoing reasons, I support this measure.

HAWAII FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
2343 ROSE STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96819

FEBRUARY 5, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2516
RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES

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 supports the intent of SB 2516, which appropriates funds to the DOA for the planning and design of reservoir in Upcountry Maui to serve both agricultural and residential water needs.

The Farm Bureau has been supporting, as part of its legislative package, millions of State funding for the dual line irrigation system for Upcountry Kula on Maui for many years. The main reason for a separate irrigation line was for the fact that the water pressure and availability of agricultural water was competing with residential use. As we are in favor of building a reservoir, we hope that this reservoir will allow for farmers to have equal use of the water.

Thank you.



LATE TESTIMONY



Maui County Farm Bureau

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

TESTIMONY

SB 2516

RELATING TO WATER RESOURCES

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

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.

Maui County Farm Bureau, on behalf of its member farmers, ranchers and agricultural organizations **strongly supports SB2516**, providing funds to the Department of Agriculture for planning and design of reservoirs in Upcountry Maui.

Maui's exponential growth has far exceeded water source development. As such we find competing uses for available water. High rainfall events in watershed areas indicate that there can be enough water for everyone if appropriate source development is done. Being rainfall dependent, this will mean storage in reservoirs during high rainfall periods for use during droughts.

Federal funding may be available. However, such funding will require a State match so authorization of funding at this time is necessary. The appropriation will allow our congressional delegation to leverage state funding to obtain Federal monies.

This reservoir will also be critical to tie into the newly constructed Dual line system. Provisions of farmers and ranchers on the dual line require them to relinquish their use of water during times of drought, providing first priority for public safety. There was no new source development associated with this transmission line. This Bill is important to keep farmers viable during drought periods.

We respectfully request your support of this Bill for timely development of new water sources for Upcountry Maui. Time is of the urgency. We cannot loose any more farmers or ranchers due to losses during droughts. Thank you.

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