

SB 2643

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 Fax: (808) 973-9613

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. 2643
RELATING TO IRRIGATION

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill No. 2643. This bill makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for capital improvements and positions. The department supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Executive Biennium Budget and offers comments.

The DOA recommends that the special-funded positions described in the bill be appropriated to AGR 141 in HB 2500 (Relating to the State Budget). Should the legislature add the positions into the budget bill, the DOA requests that: 1) the irrigation district manager, four irrigation system service worker II's, one third of the engineer VI, and one third of the clerk-typist III's salaries be paid out of the irrigation system revolving fund; 2) one third of the engineer VI, and one third of the clerk-typist III's salaries be paid out of the agricultural park special fund; 3) one third of the engineer VI, and one third of the clerk-typist III's salaries be paid out of the non-agricultural park lands special fund; 4) the ceilings for the respective programs be increased accordingly; and 5) the grade of the four irrigation system service worker II's be corrected to "BC-7" rather than "WC-7". To continue the level of service, the converted clerk-typist III

position should be made permanent. To create optimal program efficiency, we recommend that all the position counts and salaries be allocated in this manner and language related to these positions be deleted from the irrigation repair and maintenance special fund.

If funds for the Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan are being appropriated, the name of the special fund may need to be broadened. In that case, the department respectfully requests the following revisions regarding the irrigation repair and maintenance special fund: 1) the name of the "irrigation repair and maintenance special fund" be changed to the "agricultural infrastructure improvement special fund" to allow agricultural land improvement projects access to this Act.; 2) revise §167-24 (b) to read "Moneys in the [~~irrigation repair and maintenance special fund~~] agricultural infrastructure improvement special fund shall be used to fund [~~repair and maintenance of the following irrigation systems:~~] improvements for the following agricultural projects;; 3) add paragraph "(18) Studies for agricultural water and land planning" to §167-24 (b); and 4) change the wording where appropriate in this bill to reflect the revised name of the special fund.



STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
235 S. Beretania Street, Room 205
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

TESTIMONY OF ALFREDO LEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 5, 2008
2:45 p.m.

SENATE BILL NO. 2643
RELATING TO IRRIGATION

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2643. The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) supports the intent of this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact the priorities in the Executive Biennium budget.

The passage of this bill would help to ensure that irrigation water continues to be available to farms throughout the state. Since the Legislature over the past several years has required the ADC to expend \$50,000 to \$100,000 to assist with routine maintenance of the East Kauai irrigation system, we are aware of major repairs that are needed to this system and others. Completion of major repairs such as those needed for East Kauai would allow

the systems throughout the state to optimize their potential to irrigate tens of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



SB2643, RELATING TO IRRIGATION

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

February 5, 2007

2:45 p.m.

Room: 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs **SUPPORTS** SB 2643, which would provide funding for irrigation systems throughout the state, including the hiring of additional management personnel.

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.

This bill will flush some much needed funds into a vital and necessary infrastructure that has been neglected in the past. This state is also proposing to lessen its reliance on imported goods, and this bill is a step towards a more localized agricultural economy leading us towards that goal Statewide.

Further, this bill also thoughtfully provides for the hiring of additional personnel to better manage, oversee and respond to emergency situations related to agricultural systems.

OHA urges the Committees to PASS SB 2643. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HAWAII FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
2343 ROSE STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96819

FEBRUARY 5, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2643
RELATING TO IRRIGATION

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 SB 2643, authorizes general obligation bond funds to be deposited into the irrigation repair and maintenance special fund for repair and maintenance of certain irrigation systems, and for additional personnel to improve irrigation system management.

Water is the basic necessity for farmers and ranchers to maintain and expand their production. In order for farmers to fully realize their production capabilities, the irrigation infrastructure needs to be constantly maintained by a team of well trained personnel. The DOA needs additional staff and funding for the repair and maintenance of the various irrigation systems statewide.

In addition to the repairs of the irrigation system, the State Agriculture Water Use Plan is a very important document that will study the existing and future needs of the agricultural industry. This Plan will provide guidance to policy makers of all of our irrigation systems that provide water for agriculture.

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

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

SB2643

RELATING TO IRRIGATION

HEARING BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & 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.

MCFB on behalf of our member farmers, ranchers and agricultural organizations, supports SB2643, authorizing general obligation bonds for use in a irrigation repair and maintenance special fund.

Closure of plantations have left agricultural irrigation infrastructure throughout the State in disrepair. Capacity within the Department of Agriculture has not increased accordingly. This measure seeks to address this need. Timely repair and maintenance of infrastructure will reduce future capital needs to replace infrastructure that has deteriorated beyond repair as we see in some of the systems today.

We respectfully request your support towards the passage of this measure as an investment to the future. Thank you.



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

99-193 Aiea Heights Drive, Suite 300

Aiea, Hawaii 96701

Ph: 808-487-5561/Fax: 808-486-5020

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

SENATE BILL 2643

RELATING TO IRRIGATION

February 5, 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 Senate Bill 2643 Relating to Irrigation which proposes measures to support irrigation systems throughout the islands.

HARC is appreciative for this body's unfaltering support throughout the years in providing financial commitments to the state's irrigation infrastructure. Water is an essential element for successful agriculture and your actions demonstrate your awareness of that fact.

HARC strongly supports funding, tax credits and other legislation to facilitate and expedite the repair and maintenance of the state's irrigation systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Hawaii
Crop
Improvement
Association**

Paul Koehler, Past-President, Board Member
2111 Piilani Highway
Kihei Hawaii 96853
Phone: 808-879-4074 Fax: 808-879-0499

Testimony by: Paul Koehler
SB 2643, Relating to Irrigation
Senate AHW Committee
Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2008
Room 224: 2:45 pm

Position: Strong Support

Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Senate AHW Committee:

My name is Paul Koehler. I am a Maui resident, Past-President and sitting Board Member of HCIA. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii. 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 needed for this request for general obligation bonds to be deposited into the irrigation repair and maintenance special fund. With the closing of the large plantations, much of Hawaii's irrigation systems and infrastructure has fallen into disrepair. Yet, many farmers and residents are dependent on these systems for water use. Support for added personnel is also critical to make sure that repairs and maintenance can occur on a timely basis, to include a mobile disaster emergency response team.

We strongly support this measure and ask for your support. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.