

TESTIMONY
HB 1351 HD2

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
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2009
2:45 P.M.
ROOM 229

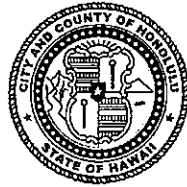
HOUSE BILL NO. 1351, H.D. 2
RELATING TO PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL PARKS.

Chairperson Hee and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1351, H.D. 2. The purpose of this bill is to create a definition of a private agricultural park for the specific purpose of allowing power generation to take place in an agriculturally zoned district. It also requires that these private agricultural parks register with the Department of Agriculture and collect information that "may be of assistance in promoting the private agricultural park." The department opposes this bill as we believe it is unnecessary since the ability to generate power in an agricultural district is already available. Furthermore, this bill creates an additional unneeded level of government oversight that the Department of Agriculture is unable to provide or enforce. It is our understanding that as the cooperative as described on page 3, lines 11-14 is already exempt from the PUC so the need for this bill at all is not clear.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 7TH FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-8000 • FAX: (808) 768-8041
DEPT. WEB SITE: www.honolulu.dpp.org • CITY WEB SITE: www.honolulu.gov



MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR

DAVID K. TANOUE
DIRECTOR
ROBERT M. SUMITOMO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

April 6, 2009

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Water, Land
Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs
State Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Hee and Members:

**Subject: House Bill No. 1351, HD2
Relating to Private Agricultural Parks**

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) **supports** House Bill 1351 HD2, which would allow neighboring agricultural lots to share electricity and other infrastructure costs to reduce their infrastructure costs. HD2 adds the clarification that the electrical transmission and distribution must be solely owned by a consumer cooperative association pursuant to Chapter 421C, HRS.

We continue to support the long-term sustainability of our agricultural industry, and the ability of farmers to reduce costs of production, while maintaining the health, safety and welfare of the larger community. This bill would accomplish both.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David K. Tanoue", is written over a horizontal line.

David K. Tanoue, Director
Department of Planning and Permitting

DKT: jmf
hb1351hd2-kst.doc

THE KOHALA DITCH PROJECT

65-1230 Mamalahoa Hwy., Suite A21, Kamuela, HI 96743

Tel: 808-885-0441 • Cell 808.895.0211

April 3, 2009

TO: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, and Members of the Committee on
Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 1351, HD 2, RELATING TO PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL PARKS



KOHALA DITCH RESTORATION & PRESERVATION PROJECT

A project to restore and preserve the historic Kohala Ditch to provide water security for farms, ranches, dairies, aquaculture ventures, recreation and ecological stewardship throughout the 21st century; and to sustain the community traditions of the people of North Kohala.

Steering Committee

Ed Boteilho
Stephen P. Bowles
Marc Kinoshita
Kirk Eubank
Bill Shontell
Ted Matsuda
Herbert M. "Monty" Richards, Jr.
Shiro Takata
Lance Caspary

Community Partners

USDA Rural Development Office
State of Hawaii Civil Defense
North Kohala Community Resource Center
Surety Kohala Corporation
AT&T Foundation
Kamehameha Schools

Staff

Rory Flynn

Aloha! I am pleased to voice strong support for HB 1351, HD 2. During the past two years, I have worked closely with many determined farmers and community supporters in North Kohala on behalf of the Kohala Ditch restoration project. We are very grateful for state, federal and private funding support that has enabled crews to muck out tunnels and rebuild flumes in the back-country of Polulu and Honokane Nui. We are also grateful for the keen support and oversight that State Civil Defense has provided to our still ongoing efforts.

Since the devastating Kiholo earthquake in 2006, our ditch steering committee has met bi-weekly (57 meetings to date) to guide the Kohala Ditch Project. Our efforts have mobilized plant nursery operators, dairymen, ranchers, and organic farmers around a common cause: restoration of a historic 14.5 mile irrigation system to serve agriculture in North Kohala. Experience has taught us that commercial agriculture requires shared, affordable infrastructure – water and energy are key examples – that serve many parcels, or is regional in scope.

The creation of private agricultural parks will enable us to connect land, water and energy across contiguous parcels to create an agricultural profit center shared by many. This synergy of resources is fundamental to farm productivity and market competitiveness. If we take the causes of food security and sustainability seriously, we need to give this a try. For many years, we have held to the belief that zoning alone protects agriculture. But our agricultural district needs to be more than a bulwark against development. It needs the resources to make agriculture an economically viable proposition. HB1351 offers us that platform to succeed.

Today, in North Kohala, a new nonprofit agricultural park is taking shape along Upolu Road. Another group of farm lot owners has formed to build a trunk line from the Kohala Ditch to the Pratt Road to support farm expansion plans. A North Kohala Agricultural Water Security Plan is being developed with help from a USDA/CREES grant administered by the Hawai'i Island Economic Development Board. All these efforts are looking at ways to make agricultural lands productive and competitive. The creation of private agricultural parks is one more way to build smart infrastructure for farmers and ranchers.

Please adopt HB1351, as amended in HD2, to give real farmers and ranchers that opportunity. Mahalo!

Sincerely,

Rory Flynn, Facilitator
Kohala Ditch Project Steering Committee

TESTIMONY
HB 1351 HD2
(END)