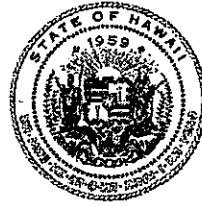


NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.**  
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**GUY H. KAULUKUKUI**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**WILLIAM M. TAM**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committees on  
AGRICULTURE  
and  
WATER, LAND, & OCEAN RESOURCES**

**Wednesday, February 2, 2011  
8:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1231  
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

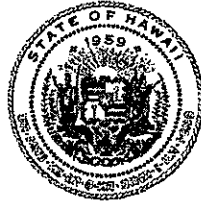
The purpose of House Bill 1231 is to provide a grant-in-aid of \$4,000,000 in general revenues for agricultural drought mitigation projects and measures across all four counties of the State, for fiscal years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) is very conscious of mitigating the effects of drought and has addressed the subject in the Hawaii Drought Plan.

However, the Department is not able to support this measure at this time because funding for the project would negatively impact the Executive Biennium 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 already 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.

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Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Testimony Transmittal Cover Sheet

Date Submitted: January 31, 2011

Testifier's Name/Title: William M. Tam, Commission on Water Resource Management,  
Deputy Director

Committee Name: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND WATER, LAND & OCEAN RESOURCES (AGR-WLO)

Day and Date: Wednesday, February 02, 2011  
Time/Location: 8:00 AM, Conference Room 312

Measure Number: HB 1231 – RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION.

Requested Copies: 5 (including original) to Room 424 in the State Capitol



## TESTIMONY

### HB 1231: RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

Chair Chang, Chair Tsuji, and Members of the Committees:

Maui County Farm Bureau on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB 1231, appropriating monies to the Counties to begin implementation of their County Drought Plans.

The last decade has been a loooonnngg drought for Maui County. Our farmers and ranchers have faced repeated years of drought. Our ranches have had to cull their herds repeatedly, reducing their profitability and croplands have sat fallow due to lack of water. We need to stop this trend.

In 2007, the Legislature implemented this measure and each County was appropriated \$1M. Maui County used these funds to repair a reservoir to reduce system losses and a portion used to prepare a Stormwater Reclamation study for Upcountry Maui. The study is completed and recommendations are available for the engineering design to increase water storage during storm events. This is a significant step to reducing our susceptibility to droughts.

This effort needs to continue. We respectfully request your support in moving this measure forward. If there are any questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at 2819718. Thank you.



**Hawaii Farm Bureau**  
F E D E R A T I O N

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Neighbor Islands: 1-800-482-1272  
Fax: (808) 848-1921; e-mail: info@hfbf.org

**TESTIMONY**

**HB 1231: RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

Chair Chang, Chair Tsuji, and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB 1231, appropriating monies to the Counties to begin implementation of their County Drought Plans.

Whenever a drought occurs, there is a flurry of planning of how to mitigate its impacts or provide emergency assistance to affected parties. This has almost been an annual event during the past decade, even as there are increased competing uses. The time to prepare for a drought is not as it occurs but before it occurs. Recent storm events have put drought off the radar screen for many. County drought plans have been developed but are sitting on shelves due to lack of resources. Many of the plans require extensive long term investment, not possible in the short term. What is required is a systematic process to accomplish projects annually so over time, there is an increase in Hawaii's ability to withstand droughts.

Agriculture, that is affected severely by drought events needs this systematic approach to maintain and increase its' viability. This past year, unirrigated areas of the State faced critical water shortages as we had the severest drought in the nation. Statewide, the cattle industry is looking to grass fed operations. Dependence on rainfall is not a strategy. Oahu reported some of the lowest reservoir levels supplying farms and Maui reported historically low ditch flows during the past few years.

We recognize the budgetary shortfalls at this time. At the same time, we see the loss of business during droughts that decrease revenues into the General Fund. Historical trends show that loss of active farms are usually not replaced. This investment is needed for Hawaii's increased self sufficiency.

We therefore, respectfully request your strong support of this measure to increase Hawaii's ability to withstand droughts. Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. If there are any questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at 2819718.