

HB 1277

HD2, SD1

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
WAYS AND MEANS**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1277, H.D. 2, S.D. 1
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE STATEWIDE AGRICULTURE WATER
DEVELOPMENT STUDY**

Chairperson Ige and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1277, H.D. 2, S.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to make an appropriation out of the agricultural development and food security special fund for the statewide agriculture water use and development plan (AWUDP). The Department supports the intent of this bill.

The Department of Agriculture has been statutorily mandated to develop the AWUDP. In recognition of this need, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has been providing matching federal funds to assist in the research necessary to continue the study. We have been informed by the BOR that another request has been submitted in their current budget. To complete this plan, in-depth studies of irrigation systems throughout the state are being conducted. As the State currently has no long-term agricultural water use plan, it is unclear how much of the abandoned sugar cane and pineapple plantation land is suitable for diversified agriculture and what the current and future water demands may be. Additionally, capital improvement projects for the aging irrigation systems need to be identified so the State can take proactive measures to prevent a catastrophic failure of an irrigation system.



The AWUDP identifies projected water uses and demand for various crops which will be instrumental in long-term planning of the systems. It will also eventually inventory all known systems identified in the first phase of the plan as well as other systems that have come to our attention, and create a capital improvement plan as needed. Work will additionally include a historic description of the original infrastructure, existing conditions, assessment of the current concerns and needs, proposed maintenance improvements, estimated costs, identification of each system's sources and water use requirements for Hawaii's expanding diversified agriculture industry, and development of long-term water use projections. The study will potentially identify which systems can be restored versus which systems may be abandoned as well as possible water source planning and development.

The Department concurs with the testimony submitted by the Hawaii Farm Bureau that the amount to be expended is \$400,000.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

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March 29, 2011

TESTIMONY

**Re: HB1277SD1 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE STATEWIDE AGRICULTURE
WATER DEVELOPMENT STUDY**

Chair Ige and Members of the Committee:

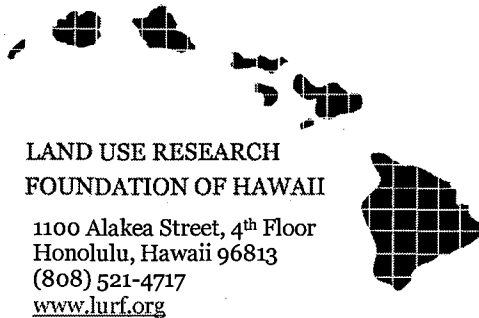
Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of commercial farm and ranch families and organizations in the State **strongly supports** HB1277 HD2, funding the completion of Hawaii's Ag Water Use and Development Plan.

The State Water Code requires a Hawaii Water Plan that addresses current and future needs of water in the State. In 1998, as large water systems were abandoned with the closure of plantations, the Legislature included the Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan as part of the State Water Plan. The intent of the measure was "to develop a long-range management plan that assesses **state and private** agricultural water use, supply and irrigation water systems." (quote from Commission on Water Resource and Management with emphasis added).

Since passage, attempts have been made to complete the Plan. Todate, it remains incomplete and the Water Commission is faced with decision making responsibilities that need this information. Past reports emphasized State systems and while they are important, they are not the only systems in the State. Many areas depend on private systems.

The completion of this plan is needed to provide information for County Water Use and Development Plans as well as the State Water Plan. Additionally, it will provide guidance for future capital expenditures as well as critical information for the Water Commission.

We request the effective date of this measure reflect the date of enactment and your strong support in its' passage. HFBF appreciates this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. If there are any questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at 2819718.



LAND USE RESEARCH
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March 30, 2011

Senator David Y. Ige, Chair and Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Support of HB 1277, HD 2, SD 1, Relating to the Statewide Agriculture Water Use and Development Plan.

Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. in CR 211 (Public Decision Making)

My name is Dave Arakawa, and I am the Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB 1277, HD 2, SD 1, and to offer comments.**

HB 1277, HD 2, SD 1. This bill proposes to make an appropriation out of the agricultural development and food security special fund for the statewide agriculture water use and development plan (AWUDP) to be completed by the State Department of Agriculture (DOA).

LURF's Position. The DOA is responsible for the preparation of the AWUDP, mandated by the State Legislature through Act 101, Session Laws of Hawaii (1998). The major objective of the AWUDP is to develop a long-range management plan that assesses state and private agricultural water use, supply and irrigation water systems.

With large amounts of prime agricultural lands and irrigation systems made available for conversion to diversified agriculture as a result of the plantation closures in the 1990s, the State presently has an opportunity to strengthen and expand Hawaii's diversified agriculture industry. Agricultural lands, however, require significant quantities of water to support and maintain productivity. Local farmers are thus relying on the AWUDP and studies conducted pursuant thereto, to be completed and updated by the DOA, as required, to work toward expansion of diversified agriculture; promote the agricultural self-sufficiency of the State; and to protect water as an important resource.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 1277, HD 2, SD 1**, funding the completion of the AWUDP.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.