



Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti

HB 1571 HD 1– RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

The House Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 24, 2011

Room 308, 11:30 a.m.

**HCIA 2010-2012
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Position: Strong Support

Aloha Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committees:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, a nonprofit trade association representing the seed industry in Hawaii. HCIA strongly supports HB 1571 HD 1 – authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds to finance statewide irrigation systems.

HCIA seed companies are vested in the agricultural future of our state and as active members of the broader agricultural community, they have invested millions into improving the irrigation, buildings and other infrastructure to support not only their own operations, but the farmers around them. Most of the 100-year old irrigation systems utilized by the seed companies and other farmers are now owned by the state, are in a sad state of disrepair, and face serious maintenance issues. Any disruption in delivering water to farmers could severely impact their viability.

HCIA has testified in support of a number of bills to appropriate funds to fix Hawaii's failing irrigation systems. We believe HB 1571 is a more comprehensive approach to addressing these challenges and as an omnibus bill, it consolidates funding requests into one vehicle and includes capital improvement projects for the East Kauai irrigation, Waimanalo irrigation, Molokai irrigation, Upcountry Maui irrigation, Lower Hamakua Ditch, Waimea Irrigation, Ka'u irrigation, Kekaha irrigation, and Kahuku irrigation systems.

We ask you to please pass HB 1571 HD 1. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment.