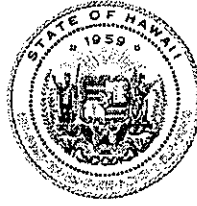
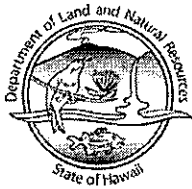


NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**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

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAIHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER, LAND AND HOUSING**

**Tuesday, February 8, 2011
1:15 P.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 143
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Senate Bill 143 appropriates \$1,000,000 in general funds in each of the Fiscal Years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) for staffing and operating expenses for the Department's Dam Safety Program. The Department supports the intent of this measure to protect the public by ensuring the safety of dams; however, we have concerns regarding the cost implications it may have on the Administration's Biennium Budget request.

Prior to Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Dam Safety Program was fully general-funded. Currently, staffing and operating expenses for the Dam Safety program are funded through departmental special funds and dam related fees collected.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743

Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607

e-mail: HCattlemens@hawaii.rr.com

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & HOUSING

Tuesday February 8, 2011 1:15 p.m. Room 225

SB 143 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Appropriates funds to the department of land and natural resources to be used for the dam safety office's staffing and operating expenses.

Chairman Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Alan Gottlieb, and I am a rancher and the Government Affairs Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130 + member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports** SB 143.

After the tragedy at Kaloko, this legislature passed new laws to improve the safety of our State's Dams and Reservoirs. Prior to Kaloko, it is our understanding, the State had but one inspector for all of the State's Dams and Reservoirs. After the new legislation was passed, the legislature did appropriate funds to run DLNR's Dam Safety office, but we understand those funds were raided in recent years. We also understand that the annual budget to run that DLNR Safety office is in excess of \$1 million per year. Late last year, the Board of Land & Natural Resources approved new regulations which in part would make annual fees for public and private dams and reservoirs in this state unaffordable for their operators. So far, The governor has wisely not signed the new rules, regulations and fees into law. We do not believe that the intent of the Dam and Reservoir safety law is to put farmers and ranchers out of business with annual fees, but that is exactly what might happen. We believe these new rules and fees would lead to the closure of many dams and reservoirs, the opposite of what we need in this State if we want to increase our agricultural self sufficiency and improve our food security. Providing funds to the Dam Safety Office, as proposed by this bill, would greatly assist the agricultural industry by limiting the crippling fees proposed in the new rules and regulations.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in favor of this very important issue.