



State of Hawaii  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE

MARCH 23, 2012, 10:00 A.M.  
ROOM 312

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 208

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
TO ADDRESS THE DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVEL OF IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY  
AND IMPROVE THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Concurrent Resolution No. 208. The purpose of this resolution is to have the Department of Agriculture address the low level of irrigation water in the Molokai Irrigation System Kualapuu Reservoir. The department respectfully believes this measure is unnecessary.

The department respects the intent of this bill, however would like to reiterate that by and large, the available water in the reservoir is highly dependent on rainfall which is beyond our control. The department has implemented mandatory conservation measures in order to slow the water level decline, but realize that this has had a negative effect on the local economy. As mentioned in our testimony for HCR 207, the department has, this year, reached out to the Molokai community to address the current extreme drought situation. In addition, the MIS is included in the State's Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan which identifies potential improvements to the system. This plan is being continuously updated. Finally, we have contacted the



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Commission on Water Resource Management and they have informed us that there is only approximately 180,000 gallons per day left for allocation in the Kualapuu aquifer. While every bit helps, this is not enough to make a measurable difference and should be considered only as a last resort.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 22, 2012 11:39 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** rob@molokaichamber.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR208 on 3/23/2012 10:00:00 AM

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for AGR 3/23/2012 10:00:00 AM HCR208

Conference room: 312  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Robert Stephenson  
Organization: Molokai Chamber of Commerce  
E-mail: [rob@molokaichamber.org](mailto:rob@molokaichamber.org)  
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:

The Molokai Irrigation System is a crucial component of the well being of all agriculture operations on Molokai. The repair and improvements to the system which can bring it to it's full potential are an important part of the re-vitalization of the entire farming industry of our island community. Being that agriculture is the backbone of the Molokai economy, the Molokai Chamber of Commerce humbly asks for your support of this measure.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if we can be of service. We're here to help.

With kindest sincere regards,

Robert Stephenson  
President & CEO  
Molokai Chamber of Commerce

**LATE TESTIMONY**

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, March 23, 2012  
TIME: 10:00am  
PLACE: Conference Room 312  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ADDRESS THE DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVEL OF IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY AND IMPROVE THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**  
HCR 208

Honorable Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hasem and Respected Committee Members,

Each irrigation system represents the most critical juncture in Agriculture – the fundamental ability to have reliable access to water, and its continued flow. Commercial users of the MIS have abided by the 30% reduction for the past 3 consecutive years, at a substantial cost of lost revenue to the MIS, loss of jobs to the island's fragile economy, and loss of planted acres for the Molokai Ag community.

These restrictions are now compounded by serious drought conditions plaguing our island, further complicating the situation, and stressing the Molokai agricultural economy to its brink.

To be sustainable, Molokai agriculture desperately needs responsible foresight and cooperative partnerships from all, at this critical juncture.

I humbly urge your support of HCR 208.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dawn Bicoy  
Kaunakakai, Molokai



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

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Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272  
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org)  
[www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

March 23, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HCR 208  
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ADDRESS THE  
DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVEL OF IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY AND IMPROVE  
THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Room 312  
10:00 AM

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

I am Dean Okimoto, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF is in strong support of HCR 208, which requests that the Department of Agriculture address the low level of irrigation water available for agriculture.

Access to reliable and affordable water is an essential need for farmers and ranchers to maintain and expand their production. Agriculture is severely affected by drought events and Hawaii needs a systematic approach to address the critical water shortages facing the Hawaii's agricultural industry.

The Molokai Irrigation System (MIS) represents the most critical juncture in Molokai's agricultural industry. The irrigation water restrictions placed on Molokai's farmers and ranchers jeopardizes their viability and Molokai's fragile economy.

There is potential to increase agricultural production on Molokai by further developing the MIS. If improvements can be made to support increased acreage, Molokai could increase employment in the Agricultural sector as well as create additional revenue for the system itself, which could be used for maintenance and/or improvements making the MIS less dependent on State funding.

There are other reservoir dependent irrigation systems across the State. As suggested by the title of this measure, we respectfully request that all reservoirs be evaluated. We respectfully request your strong support of HCR 208.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, March 23, 2012 9:23 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** rosiedavis777@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR208 on 3/23/2012 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/23/2012 10:00:00 AM HCR208

Conference room: 312  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Rosie F. Davis  
Organization: Individual  
E-mail: [rosiedavis777@yahoo.com](mailto:rosiedavis777@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/23/2012

**Comments:**

Aloha, I support HR208, I am a homesteader from Molokai. Please pass HR208 Malama pono Rosie