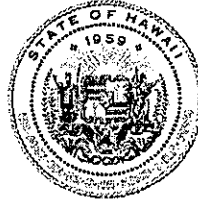


# **SB 144**

**MAKING A GRANT-IN-AID APPROPRIATION TO THE COUNTIES TO  
FINANCE DROUGHT MITIGATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES.**

Makes a grant-in aid to the counties for drought mitigation purposes.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

**Before the Senate Committees on  
PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
and  
WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING**

**Thursday, February 3, 2011  
3:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 144  
MAKING A GRANT-IN-AID APPROPRIATION TO THE COUNTIES TO FINANCE  
DROUGHT MITIGATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES**

The purpose of Senate Bill 144 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 year 2011-2012. 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 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.

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

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BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
Governor



**RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**JAMES J. NAKATANI**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,  
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2011  
3:30 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 144  
MAKING A GRANT-IN-AID APPROPRIATION TO THE COUNTIES TO FINANCE DROUGHT  
MITIGATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES**

Chairpersons Espero and Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 144. The purpose of this bill is to make grants-in-aid to the counties for drought mitigation projects and measures. The department supports the intent of this bill and respectfully defers to the Commission on Water Resource Management regarding implementation.

The effects of drought on agriculture can be devastating. The drought that occurred this past year highlighted the competition for limited water resources. With the possibility of drought lasting for years, crop yields can fall dramatically and farms can close. Approximately seven years ago, the Commission on Water Resource Management assisted in the creation of drought committees in each county. The committees then came up with prioritized, potential projects, including reservoir construction, to implement in order to mitigate the effects of drought. This request represents recognition of the importance and need for these projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





## **TESTIMONY**

### **SB144: RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

Chair Espero, Chair Delacruz, and Members of the Committees:

Maui County Farm Bureau on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** SB144, appropriating monies to the Counties to begin implementation of their County Drought Plans.

The last decade has been a loooonngg 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 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](mailto:HCattlemens@hawaii.rr.com)

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOV OPERATIONS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING

Thursday February 3, 2011 3:30 pm Room 224

### **SB 144 MAKING A GRANT-IN-AID APPROPRIATION TO THE COUNTIES TO FINANCE DROUGHT MITIGATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES.**

Chair Espero, Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

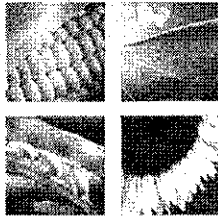
My name is Alan Gottlieb, and I am a rancher and the Government Affairs Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 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 144.

Hawaii has suffered through drought over the past five years, and this past year any areas in Hawaii were considered by the Federal Government to be in D-4 drought category, the highest level of drought. Hawaii was the driest State in the United States. Some of our largest ranch and farm regions in the State including Kohala and Kau, as well as many parts of Maui County were the worst. In fact, Kohala is still very dry despite the large rains received in other areas of the State in December and January.

All the while through this drought the State has drought mitigation plans, but no money to act on the plan. We urge you to support this bill which would provide funds to the Counties to implement the Drought Mitigation plans.

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



# Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

*Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii*

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director

SB 144 – Making a Grant-in-Aid Appropriation to the Counties  
to Finance Drought Mitigation Projects and Measures  
The Senate Committees on  
Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs, and  
Water, Land and Housing  
Thursday, February 3, 2011  
Room 224, 3:30 p.m.

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**Past President**  
Adolph Helm

**Executive Director**  
Alicia Maluafiti

**Position: Strongly Support**

Aloha Chairs Espero and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Kidani and Solomon, and members of the Committee:

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 SB 144 – making a grant in aid appropriation to the counties to finance drought mitigation projects and measures.

The Hawaii seed industry is an important and contributing member of Hawaii's agricultural community with operations on Oahu, Maui, Molokai and Kauai. We – along with other farmers – have suffered through unprecedented drought conditions. A half century of dwindling rainfall in our islands has been followed by a two-year dry spell which has fueled wildfires and destroyed crops from Oahu to the Big Island.

Disruption in accessing water due to extreme drought conditions or delivering water to farmers through failing irrigation system severely impacts the viability of all farmers and contributes to Hawaii's food security challenges. The counties are in best positioned to address many of these unique and specific water issues on their respective islands as they work in collaboration with farmers as well as the county farm bureaus. We believe a grant-in-aid appropriation to assist them in dealing with their drought challenges is important not only for farmers and their islands, but for the entire state.

We ask you to please pass SB 144. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment.