



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

2343 Rose Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: info@hfbf.org
www.hfbf.org

LATE

February 9, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER LAND AND HOUSING

TESTIMONY ON **SB 2667**
RELATING TO WATER

Room 225
1:15 AM

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Solomon, 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.

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation is in **strong support** of this measure with suggested amendments.

Changing weather conditions make water one of the most important risks facing farmers and ranchers. As Hawaii moves towards increased self sufficiency and sustainability, efforts must be taken to reduce risks borne by farms and ranches. When borne alone, farm and ranch viability is reduced to points in which farmers and ranchers must make the hard decision of whether their enterprise can support their families or survive as a business.

This year, the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation has introduced a number of measures – all of which address various issues associated with increasing farm and ranch viability. Water is among the most important. Agriculture is not asking for a priority. We are asking that it be recognized as a public trust interest consistent with the State's goal of increased sustainability and self sufficiency, as highlighted in the State Constitution.

We appreciate this opportunity to discuss this important matter. HFBF respectfully requests your consideration of this measure as a means to reduce farm and ranch risks. We want to keep our farmers and ranchers in the field growing crops and raising livestock – not in courtrooms defending their right to their most critical resource. Agriculture is the entity that is needed to provide for Hawaii's self sufficiency and sustainability and therefore is a public trust interest.

We respectfully request that a policy statement about the importance of water and agriculture be included in State statute.

Thank you for this opportunity to address this important issue. If there are questions, please contact Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison at (808) 848-2074.



LATE

February 9, 2012

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Malama Solomon, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Housing

Support of SB 2667, Relating to Water (Establishes a joint legislative committee to delineate the meaning of “water security” and establish benchmarks.)

Wednesday, February 9, 2012, 1:15 p.m., in CR 225

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.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support of SB 2667.**

SB 2667. The purpose of this bill is establish a joint legislative committee on water security which shall clearly delineate the meaning of “water security” to unify the efforts of state agencies, county agencies, and other stakeholders in developing water security strategies, including the acquisition of sufficient water to meet current and future agricultural and population needs of the state and the provision of a reliable, adequate, and sustainable water system that is resilient to man-made, natural, and technical risks. The joint task force shall also establish benchmarks to track improvements in water security.

LURF’s Position. LURF members include private property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and utilize water systems for agricultural crops, and who consider such resources critical to conduct their agricultural operations and to sustain their businesses. These land owners and agricultural stakeholders look forward to the adoption of SB 2667 and the work of the joint legislative committee, in hopes that its report will include findings, recommendations, legislation and benchmarks which can be implemented to develop sufficient water systems to meet the current and future agricultural and domestic needs of the state.

For the reasons stated above, LURF is in **support of SB 2667**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

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