



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

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HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2857, SD1
RELATING TO SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE BONDS TO ASSIST DAM AND
RESERVOIR OWNERS

Room 211
9:00 AM

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison for 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 HB 2857, SD1, providing special purpose revenue bonds to assist owners of dams and reservoirs.

Reliable and affordable water is key to viable farms and ranches. Ranches and irrigated areas across the State depend on reservoirs and dams to carry them through times of little or no rainfall. Since the passage of the Dam and Reservoir Safety law, owners and users of these structures have worked with DLNR to seek practical implementation measures while meeting the goal of safety. While the rules are one issue, the classification of the reservoirs continues to be a concern and we are working with staff to review the current status of the dams and reservoirs. This will determine how much work is needed.

In the case of high risk reservoirs, extensive engineering studies followed by corrective action are placing extreme economic burdens on our farmers and ranchers. They all want to do the right thing. Safety is of utmost concern. At the same time, it is not the intent of the Dam and Reservoir safety law to put farmers and ranchers out of business as they try to comply with the measure. This bill provides a mechanism to reduce the premature

decommissioning of reservoirs. Testimonies will be received by this body from farms and ranches across the State providing unique examples of impacts of this measure.

We respectfully request your assistance in passing this measure to protect our critical agricultural water infrastructure while complying with safety requirements.

I can be reached at (808) 848-2074 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.