



# DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Statement of  
**JESSE K. SOUKI**  
Director, Office of Planning  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND**  
Monday, February 4, 2013  
10:50 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of  
**HB 1120**  
**RELATING TO LAND USE.**

Chair Evans, Vice Chair Lowen, and Members of the House Committee on Water and Land.

The Office of Planning (OP) opposes HB 1120, which would amend the duties of OP in Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 226-53 to include the establishment and periodic update of a detailed land use classification productivity rating system, similar to that undertaken by the former Land Study Bureau.

OP does not have the expertise or resources to assume this function. This function requires soil scientists, climatologists, agronomists, hydrologists, geologists, agricultural economists, and cooperative extension agents to study and evaluate crop selection and cultivation or cultural practices to determine productivity for different land types. The Land Study Bureau was based at the University of Hawaii, and was staffed by faculty and technicians with this expertise. This function would be more appropriately placed within the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources or the Department of Agriculture, and significant resources would be required to undertake the field surveys and consultations required to update the productivity ratings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.