

# **SB 1284**

## **Testimony**

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committees on  
AGRICULTURE  
and  
WATER and LAND**

**Thursday, January 31, 2013  
2:45 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 1284  
RELATING TO FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

The purpose of Senate Bill 1284 is to establish a statewide food sustainability standard to promote local food production in order to increase Hawaii's agricultural self-sufficiency and diversify the economy. While the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill, the Department defers to the State Department of Agriculture (DOA) regarding the administration of this program and impact on its supplemental budget request.

The Department's' Commission on Water Resources Management recognizes and supports long-range water planning. Section 174C-31(e), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), requires DOA to prepare a State Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan (AWUDP). The AWUDP includes a master irrigation inventory plan for public and private irrigation water systems, a repair and rehabilitation plan for each system, and identifies current and future water needs for agricultural operations, particularly on those lands identified as important agricultural lands under Part III of Chapter 205 HRS.

Should this measure be enacted into law, the water needs and sources of agricultural water to achieve the food sustainability standard should be incorporated into the next update of the AWUDP.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/28/2013

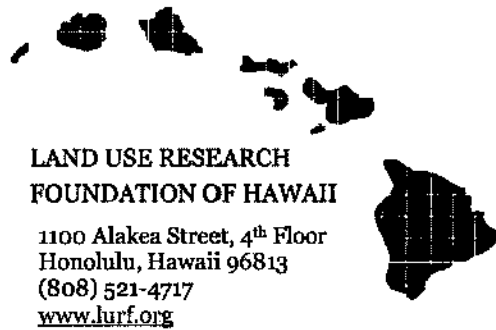
Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cathy Goeggel	Animal Rights Hawai'i	Comments Only	Yes

Comments: Animal Rights Hawai'i opposes the use of taxpayer dollars to prop up the livestock industry. There are many farmers who are producing plant based food (often organic) that deserve support. The foundering livestock industry does not.

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LAND USE RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

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January 30, 2013

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture

Senator Malama Solomon, Chair  
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Water and Land

**Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB 1284, Relating to Food Sustainability  
(Requires the development of a food sustainability standard to promote local food  
production to help diversify the local economy).**

**Thursday, January 31, 2013, 2:45 p.m., in CR 229**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission 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 its comments, concerns and strong opposition to **SB 1284**, on behalf of its members, who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii. This bill is based on a 2012 House bill, which did not involve any discussions, assistance and input from the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation or agricultural landowners; and which had a hidden agenda and ulterior motives to impose a moratorium on land use approvals. Thus, this bill conveys the need for collaboration amongst diverse sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve food sustainability and the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry.

**SB 1284.** This bill requires the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to develop a food sustainability standard (FSS) purportedly to "promote local food production to help diversify the local economy." However, LURF believes that if HB 1284 is truly intended to promote local food production, the bill must necessarily address key related issues such as the cost of land; water availability; labor costs and availability; transportation costs; invasive species; and marketing, all of which must be taken into consideration in order to establish realistic food production and sustainability standards.

It is interesting to note that the actual, original, and sole intent of similar, previously introduced bills was to stop further reclassification of agricultural lands by setting a

standard for local food production and then “punishing” landowners when the standard was not met by the State through the imposition of unfair and arbitrary moratoriums on land use reclassification of agricultural land.

While the current bill does not include any “punishment provisions,” it nevertheless appears to be infused with the underlying intent of the prior bills, as it ignores the DOA’s ongoing research and development of food production metrics; requires the DOA to accept an arbitrary state food production standard; disregards the potential occurrence of natural disasters and other incidents beyond human control including droughts, floods and hurricanes, which would affect food production; and is completely oblivious to the fact that DOA’s 2008 statistics show that agricultural exports comprised about 85% of Hawaii’s farm and livestock sales (sugar cane, macadamia nuts, coffee, seed crops, floriculture, nursery products, cattle and calves), while local consumption amounted to about 15% of sales.

**LURF’s Position.** Over the years, LURF has consistently and strongly supported agriculture, agriculture development, the IAL law and water for agriculture. LURF also supports food security and food self-sufficiency, however, LURF has serious concerns with SB 1284, for the following reasons:

1. **Questionable intent and purpose of SB 1284.** Contrary to what would seem required and rational to be included in the proposed bill given the magnitude of its subject matter, SB 1284 does not include support for any agricultural programs; does not address any issues which would increase local food production; and does not involve a collaboration of agricultural stakeholders to support the effort to increase local food production. Thus, the underlying purpose and desired outcome of SB 1284 is questionable, and appears only to be to direct the DOA to collect data to establish an FSS (which has been, and will be ignored), then to create an arbitrary, unrealistic FSS which cannot be met by the State in order that in the future, opponents of land use reclassifications and zone changes can potentially use such information to either oppose such land use approvals or lobby for legislation imposing sanctions against landowners based on the State’s failure to meet the arbitrary FSS.
2. **Must trust the experts on food production, security and sustainability.** LURF questions the informational and factual basis upon which SB 1284 attempts to establish the proposed arbitrary FSS set out in the bill; and whether the original author of the bill is knowledgeable and experienced in agricultural production.
  - a. **SB 1284 ignores the DOA’s metrics research and data collected regarding food production, and sets an arbitrary FSS.** This bill is premised on the unreasonable belief that increased agricultural production can simply be attained by setting an arbitrary standard. The DOA, however, understands that successful and viable agriculture is very complex and involves many issues, including agricultural infrastructure, labor, biosecurity, food safety, market development, research and development, agricultural lands, water and water treatment, pest management, and food safety – all of which are not addressed in this measure.
  - b. **The DOA should retain its authority to establish its own food production and sustainability metrics or standards.** The DOA and its experts in agricultural food production should not be forced by this bill to accept an arbitrary FSS mandated to be achieved by 2025, of “at least double the amount grown in 2015.” LURF understands that the DOA has already been, and is currently working on developing metrics to determine the current levels of agriculture within the State.

The DOA should be allowed to complete these metrics as a necessary step prior to determining if and when any food sustainability standard or other sustainability standards should be established. Variables which should necessarily be considered as part of the establishment of said standards include: land costs; water availability; labor costs and availability; transportation costs; invasive species; marketing costs; and the long term economic viability of farms, ranches, and other agricultural facilities and programs.

- c. **SB 1284 is exclusionary; usurps DOA's authority; ignores DOA's expertise relating to food production; and is divisive.** The drafting of this bill did not include the participation of the DOA, Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, large agricultural landowners, or other agricultural stakeholders. This collaborative effort is crucial, especially because of the possibility that those same landowners could possibly face obstacles, or future penalties or sanctions if the FSS is not met. It disregards DOA's ongoing work on food production metrics; requires DOT to collect data, just so that it can be ignored; and forces DOA to accept an arbitrary FSS of "at least double the amount grown in 2015" by 2025. Any failure to meet this arbitrary FSS will result in blame, finger-pointing, and likely the proponent's original intent of this bill – the unreasonable and unjustified punishment of landowners.
  - d. **LURF would be in support of DOA's collection, compilation, analysis and presentation of in-shipment data.** LURF would encourage and support the DOA's collection, compilation, analysis and presentation of data and other information relating to imports and exports to support the establishment of an appropriate FSS, however, is unable to defend the creation of an arbitrary standard by unknown authorities based on unsubstantiated data.
- 3. DOA staff must be retained to implement programs related to this measure.** LURF supports the hiring of necessary DOA positions and funding for DOA staff necessary to collect, compile and analyze in-shipment data; to work collaboratively with the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii at Manoa to develop a system to gather and analyze relevant data; to prepare DOA metrics relating to the levels of agriculture in the State; and to present findings to the community. LURF respectfully recommends that the DOA, the State Administration, and the Legislature explore funding alternatives necessary for programs implemented pursuant to this bill.

It is LURF's position that in lieu of imposing an arbitrary FSS, alternative legislation which would better address issues relating to increasing local food production should be considered and enacted. Such legislation would ideally authorize the creation of an agricultural development and/or food security program within the DOA, through which the DOA would develop and fund new and existing programs and facilities to promote the development of agriculture and food security within the State. Such a measure would emphasize cooperation and cohesive industry strategies and planning; a holistic approach from farm to market; and active participation from all of the stakeholders in the agricultural industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to present comments, concerns and **opposition** regarding this measure.



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS\*

***League of Women Voters of Hawaii***

49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813

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Committee on Agriculture

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara Chair; Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Committee on Water and Land

Senator Malama Solomon, Chair; Senator Maile Shimabakuro, Vice Chair

Thursday, January 31, 2013, 2:45 P.M.

**SB1284 RELATING TO FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

**TESTIMONY**

Nancy Davlantes, Legislative Committee Member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chairs Nishihara and Solomon, Vice-Chairs Kouchi and Shimabakuro, and Committee Members:

**The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB1284** which would require the Department of Agriculture to develop a food sustainability standard to promote local food production to help diversify the local economy and would appropriate the necessary funds to accomplish this.

As we have testified on other bills on this issue, League of Women Voters has long supported a system of sustainable, regenerative agricultural production that moves toward an environmentally sound agricultural sector which includes promoting stewardship to preserve and protect human and natural agricultural resources.

The League believes that if agriculture is to be sustainable and regenerative in Hawaii, given its isolation from the Mainland, it must include increasing production of locally grown foods; encouraging the marketing, purchasing, and consumption of locally grown foods; and supporting an agricultural workforce and infrastructure.

We have seen opinion polls that show this issue to be one of the top political concerns of voters in Hawaii. They also show that local people are prepared to pay a little more than for imported food because they place a premium on locally grown food.

We are pleased that a number of bills are now before the legislature to promote more self-sufficiency and are in support of Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution: *"The State shall conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands. The legislature shall provide standards and criteria to accomplish the foregoing."*

We urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/29/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Roy N. Morioka	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members: I am concerned that we are missing an integral and important sector in this discussion of food sustainability, the local smallboat fishing fleet. This fleet has been under attack initiated by Environmental NGOs to eliminate fishing as we know it today and the ever growing competition of fish imported from regions where safe food processing practices are minimal or non-existent. This fleet brings to market fresh island fish such as akule, opelu, aku, mahimahi, ono, ahi, marlin etc. and suffering from high fuel and bait costs and receiving marginal returns. It is well documented that when the state economy slows many construction and other affected workers go fishing for food and to supplement family income. As such, if there is to be food sustainability standard established it would unconscionable to not include our nearshore and pelagic fishery resources and the industry that brings them to market. Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully Submitted, Roy N. Morioka

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Suzanne Wakelin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please vote YES to supporting agriculture and food sustainability in Hawai'i. I endeavor to purchase goods that are grown in Hawai'i and wish there to be less dependence on imported products.

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Harvey Arkin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I buy and support locally grown food. please approve SB 1284. Thank you

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Randy Ching	Individual	Support	No

Comments: SB 1284 will give the Dept. of Agriculture a chance to examine what exactly is preventing us from growing more of the food we consume locally. We need to know this information in order to create an infrastructure that will overcome institutional obstacles (like month-to-month leases instead of 50-year leases). Please support this bill and move it forward. Mahalo.

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Adam Bensley	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support this bill

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**SB1284**

Submitted on: 1/30/2013

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sandra Scarr	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support SB 1284 to give the HDOA sufficient resources to survey Hawaii's local food production, with the goal of increasing locally produced food. It is essential for Hawaii to increase the production of local food for economic reasons and for food security.

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