

# **SB 1358**

## Testimony

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**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB1358 on Jan 31, 2013 14:45PM\*  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 29, 2013 10:07:58 PM

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**SB1358**

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>
maria	molokaichamber of commerce	Support	No

Comments:

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MOLOKAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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**Testimony to the Senate  
Committee on Agriculture/Committee on Water and Land  
Thursday, January 31, 2013  
2:45 p.m.  
State Capitol - Conference Room 229**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 1358 RELATING TO IRRIGATION**

Authorizing issuance of general obligation bonds to make improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System

Aloha Honorable Chairs Nishihara and Solomon, Vice Chairs Kouchi and Shimabukuro and respected committee members:

My name is Robert Stephenson and I am the President of The Molokai Chamber of Commerce, which represents dozens of businesses that employ hundreds of people here on the Friendly Isle.

We stand in strong support of SB 1358.

Agriculture is an essential part of the Molokai economy and for it to continue to be a sustainable economic engine we need to ensure our agricultural producers continue to have access to a stable water source and distribution network. The improvements possible as a result of this bill will allow all of our island farmers to better utilize the capacity of the Molokai Irrigation System to increase their production and yields which will have a direct benefit to the local Molokai community.

Increased capacity will also mean increased revenues for the MIS to better address ongoing maintenance and improvements while placing a smaller burden on the State's financial resources.

In a time when we are all focusing on job creation and economic growth, this measure will most certainly have a positive effect on our well being as a sustainable agricultural community.

We respectfully ask that you support SB 1358.

Sincerely,

Robert Stephenson, President

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**SB1358**

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>
Nancy Schmicker	Molokai Ranch	Support	Yes

Comments:

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SENATE HEARING  
Committee on Agriculture / Committee on Water and Land

Thursday, January 31, 2013  
2:45 PM, Conference Room 229  
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

**Testimony IN SUPPORT of SB1358**

Authorizing issuance of general obligation bonds to make improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System

Aloha Honorable Chairs Nishihara and Solomon, Vice Chairs Kouchi and Shimabukuro and respected committee members:

My name is Dawn Bicoy, I am a long time local resident of Molokai and employed with Monsanto Molokai. I am intimately familiar with the MIS and its condition. Because of this I **support SB1358** and the issuance of general obligation bonds to make improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System (MIS).

The MIS is the only agricultural water source on Molokai. Thus it represents the most critical and important juncture for our Molokai agriculture community and our agricultural commerce – the essential access to water, and its reliable certainty of delivery. But there are needed improvements that are critical to our farmers and ranchers whose investment and livelihood directly or indirectly, depend on its continuous delivery.

I've tried to synopsise some of our current issues:

- Drought conditions in recent years have significantly reduced watershed capacities here on Molokai and across the state.
- Stored supply is no longer capable of meeting the minimum summer demand.
- Current water use restrictions have caused significant economic loss to the Molokai community.
- Security of the fragile agricultural economy is at risk.
  - Particular example is the Molokai Irrigation System storage levels stand at 50% of 2011 levels and rainfall in the service area stands at less than 10% of normal.
- Molokai user community has operated under 30% restriction for nearly 3 years, over 90 jobs lost and negative economic impact in the greater island community of more than \$2,000,000.

Although we have made intermittent repairs to date, it has yet allowed us to achieve the system's meant capacity for which it was designed. This underutilization has much potential and poses a valid concern when addressing sustaining, viable agriculture, ranching and agricultural lands. I've tried to address some longer term issues:

- Increased supply of irrigation water to meet realistic existing user demand can provide significant increase in economic benefit to island communities, i.e., 130 new jobs on the island of Molokai alone.
- Consider that increased water sales has significant potential to pay back the amortized cost of capital and make the system less dependent on state funding.
- The inability of the only agricultural water source on Molokai to use its actual capacity is an earnest reason to address its critically needed improvements.

Adding to the complexities, we have faced the urgency caused by our 3 year drought compounded by the recent severe emergency drought conditions occurring within the last couple of months. This has required vital mitigation and additional costs for the survival of our Molokai crops and livestock.

To be sustainable, Agriculture needs responsible foresight and cooperative partnerships from all sectors, of which we have on Molokai. We thank the legislature for granting us past funding for needed repairs, and ask for your continued support. We also have confidence in the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Resource Management Division to assess the final figures that will be needed to accomplish these improvements. Together we can better sustain agriculture, for Molokai's today and tomorrow.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I humbly ask that you support SB1358.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Bicoy  
Community Affairs Manager, Monsanto Molokai

SENATE HEARING

Committee on Agriculture / Committee on Water and Land

Thursday, January 31, 2013  
2:45 PM, Conference Room 229  
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

**Testimony IN SUPPORT of SB1358**

Authorizing issuance of general obligation bonds to make improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System

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Honorable Chairs Nishihara and Solomon, Vice Chairs Kouchi and Shimabukuro and respected committee members:

The Molokai Farm Bureau on behalf of our farms, ranch families and organizations, **strongly support SB1358** and the issuance of general obligation bonds for the appropriation of CIP funds to make necessary improvements to the Molokai Irrigation System (MIS).

We appreciate the State's efforts to date in meeting the drought related challenges to agriculture on Molokai and thank the legislature for maintenance and repair funding during the last three years. There have been substantial improvements, but we continue the need for development of existing or new sourcing to increase the supply of water.

Our Molokai user community has operated under 30% supply restrictions for three years at a cost of over 90 jobs lost and negative economic impact of more than \$2,000,000; concurrently the MIS lost over \$135,000 in revenue during that period.

Yet, the outlook for agriculture on Molokai is favorable. Our existing businesses combined can provide over 500 new planted acres each year, more than 130 new jobs and \$170,000 new annual revenue to the MIS. But the water use restriction needs to be lifted and supply must be improved for this to be successful.

We offer the following comments with specific suggestions for short term improvement:

The immediate need is to provide for existing crop plans by developing an additional 1.0 million gallons per day of dependable supply.

- Increase the current CWRM water use permit from .85 mgd to 1.60 of the system's 2.5mgd sustainable yield.
- Monitor actual water levels in the MIS wells to confirm supply capacities.
- Optimize pumping from all wells individually within their supply capacities as defined by actual water levels. These capacities will vary with rainfall, i.e., provide more in the winter, less in summer.
- Utilize the new SCADA system to automate the operation of all wells.
- Seek to maintain a minimum reservoir level equal to reasonable use projections for one full year's activity. Projections to be provided annually by users. Implement cooperative annual supply and demand planning.
- Accept evaporation as a natural loss; include pan evaporation values in the use projections.
- Develop the MPL 'Kakalahale' well and associated CWRM permit, as an additional agricultural source only, discharging into the MIS and blending at an appropriate level.
- Evaluate the economics and feasibility of diesel powered generators, leased or purchased, to provide MIS power needs on demand. Capture the associated power cost savings.
- Monitor system performance vs. design capacities on an ongoing basis (i.e. tunnel outflow rate, pipeline discharge flow rate). Monitor total system supply, actual pan evaporation, metered use and unaccounted for losses.
- Report system performance data to the MISUAB monthly.



## *Molokai Farm Bureau*



An Affiliate of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

Real long term development of agriculture on Molokai is primarily dependent on the adequate supply of water by the MIS. For example, if there are 4,000 arable crop acres currently served by the MIS. One row crop annually on each of these acres would require a total of 5.5 million gallons. Including reasonable system losses, that equals a system capacity of 6 million gallons per day.

We suggest that this value be the long term objective to provide sufficient water for all MIS users, at the expense of no one. Our long term recommendations follow:

- Develop additional basal aquifer sources to discharge into Waikolu stream or the existing MIS facility (extend Waikolu wells; new Waikolu wells at lower elevation; South slope well(s) with pipeline to MIS west portal).
- Diesel engine or diesel powered generator(s) are the most cost effective equipment available today. Purchase or lease diesel powered generator set(s) to provide MIS power requirements on demand. Capture the associated power cost savings.

The greater Molokai community can no longer bear the losses associated with restrictions and divisiveness. We are available at your convenience to discuss these objectives and recommendations further. You can count on us to assist however needed to

***“Provide sufficient agricultural water for all users, at the expense of no one.”***

Thus, we humbly ask that you support SB1358.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the participating members of the Molokai Farm Bureau,

Ray Foster  
President, Molokai Farm Bureau

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**SB1358**

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>
walter ritte	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: This will benefit the Monsantos, using public funds to their benefit. What will be improved? During droughts, Monsanto does not cut back use, they just pay the extra cost for the water as part of their penalty for not cutting back. Monsanto has eight water meters into the MIS. This is a top down bill and has no support, because there has been no public process to create this bill.

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**SB1358**

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>
Steve Jaquess	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This is great news - i hope the bill passes. Thank You. Steve

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**SB1358**

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>
Pancho Alcon	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this bill as it will help to repair our aged system and make it more efficient and increase the storage capacity which will help our farmers on Molokai.

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**SB1358**

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lynn Decoite	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**SB1358**

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>
Albert Ranis Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Living on Molokai for the past 10 plus years, I can attest to the drought we have on the island. It is essential to makes repair and provide maintenance for our irrigational systems necessary for agricultural production and food sustainability. The passing of this act will only benefit our drought plagued island. It will allow the director of finance to release bond obligations up to 3,000,000 or portion thereof and allow funding for the improvement of our Molokai irrigation system. For these reasons I am infavor for SB1358.

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