

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE**

**MARCH 17, 2014, 9:00 A.M.
ROOM 312**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2296, SD2
RELATING TO THE DISPOSITION OF LANDS MANAGED BY THE STATE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Wooley and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2296, SD 2. The purpose of this bill is to allow the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to select qualified applicants as backup lessees with whom the HDOA may negotiate upon the failure by the highest offering bidder. The HDOA supports this bill.

A significant portion of the HDOA's mission is to provide small farmers the opportunity to develop a successful agricultural business. This provides positive benefits to the State in many ways, including economic development and achieving greater food self-sufficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2014 9:08 AM
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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2296 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM*

SB2296

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chris Manfredi	Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	Yes

Comments:

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SB2296

Submitted on: 3/14/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Penny Levin	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I support the intent of this bill but have the following comments: We are currently 85-90% dependent on food from outside the state. This bill does nothing to encourage, support or improve food security but has every opportunity to do so. Selecting the highest bidders and backup lessees does not mean that the intended agricultural uses or crops will be for local food consumption. If the state and the DOA wish to get serious about the imbalance of our food economy, then the selection process should be one that places production of food crops intended for local markets on equal footing with highest bid, at the top of the selection process, and export crops at the bottom. Secondly, the DOA could take measureable steps at the lease-making process to reduce soil erosion and pesticide impacts by moving those applicants with best management practices in their farm plans or already in use on their current farms, to a higher position in the bid process. Highest bid means nothing if the impacts to the environment caused by poor farm practices (ie. soil and pesticide runoff or drift) costs the state much more in damage to its reefs, farm lands (soil loss and decline in soil quality), and neighboring communities. It is clear from satellite images of our coastal waters that existing BMPs are insufficient to prevent such damage. If we are going to make it easier for the DOA to get leases to new growers, I encourage the legislature to also make it easier for state ag lands to take a strong turn towards sustainability and food security.

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