



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
Monday, March 17, 2014 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 325

Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 3026 SD 2, Authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds for the Waimea-Paauilo Watershed Project

Dear Chair Evans, Vice Chair Lowen and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am general partner of the Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally grown food, increase renewable energy, and reduce/recycle waste. Ulupono invests in projects that have the potential to create large-scale, innovative change.

Ulupono strongly supports SB 3026 SD 2, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for the Waimea-Paauilo watershed project. In identifying the most successful regions for local food production, the north side of the Big Island stands out as one of the state's best. This area has numerous farmers and ranchers that are productively feeding our local population.

Ulupono sees tremendous potential in the region for developing grass-fed livestock, whose costs are less tied to volatile fossil fuel and imported feed prices. We believe this can make the local cattle industry thrive in a long-term economically sustainable way. Ulupono has and is currently working with agricultural entities in the region on projects to do so.

The key driver of successful grass-fed operations is the rancher's ability to grow the most nutritious grass at the fastest rate. This requires consistent access to water, be it for free from rainfall or through irrigation in drier times. However, much of the rainfall is not adequately captured in the region. The funding from this bill will provide our local farmers and ranchers with access to more water, as there is already a shortage. Currently, local farmers and ranchers in the region are already purchasing all available water from the Waimea irrigation system.

We believe that by working together we can help produce more local food, support an economically strong homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta
General Partner

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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
WATER AND LAND**

**MARCH 17, 2014, 9:00 A.M.
ROOM 325**

**SENATE BILL NO. 3026 SD2
AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS FOR THE
WAIMEA-PAAUILO WATERSHED PROJECT**

Chairperson Evans and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 3026 SD2. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate general obligation bonds to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture for the Waimea-Paauilo Watershed Project.

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture supports this bill, as it will provide funds for essential irrigation improvements to the Waimea-Paauilo watershed.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify.

